

# THE MASK AND THE FACE

*An introduction to your Self*

*by*

KENNETH MELVIN

*With a Foreword by*

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THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN COMPLETE  
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TO  
MY MOTHER

‘Whoever you are, holding me now in hand,  
Without one thing all will be useless;  
I give you fair warning before you attempt me further,  
I am not what you supposed, but far different.’

WHITMAN



## FOREWORD

MR. MELVIN has written a book about the most important subject in the world—ourselves, and we will be grateful for this attention at a time like this. He ranges far and wide in his search for authority and example, and the whole is presented with unusual vigour. The vastness of the subject and the difficulty of reducing its elements to simple question and answer are clearly in his mind throughout, yet do not turn him from his course.

Solely as a study of human personality, the book will repay the careful reader. Scales will fall from his eyes as he sees himself clearly pictured as one of many types, and as the origin and mechanism of many of his daily acts are dissected and displayed for his inspection. Such knowledge will give him power in his daily life, and understanding and sympathy towards himself and his neighbours.

The emphasis is chiefly on self-understanding, and the series of questionnaires attached to each chapter is designed to help the reader to some estimation of himself. No two authors, having the same object, could prepare the same questions, give the same emphasis to the different aspects, nor award the same 'marks'. No two readers would interpret the questions in the same way, nor perhaps give comparable answers, even granting an equal degree of detachment, of freedom from anxiety to 'praise' or 'blame' themselves. Nevertheless, I think the questions are worthy

of the detailed attention of readers, particularly younger readers. A working idea of one's own potentialities, of weakness and strength, properly considered, must be of value. This 'proper consideration' also comes out in the book, for it indicates useful fields for personality and character types that may appear to be at a disadvantage at the present time. The Adlerian attitude of progress towards power over the situation also aids 'proper consideration' in my view. For even if it were not true it acts 'as if' it were true. Isaiah is a good man to read even though we know perfectly well that every valley is not going to be exalted in our lifetime.

Though the main emphasis—perhaps object—of the book is self-understanding, I think the reader may gain as much if not more through his greater understanding of his fellows. At the outset it is just as much fun classifying one's friends and enemies, including one's boss, as oneself. But later on one finds oneself understanding their difficulties and failures as well as their successes, and greater insight is achieved. To know all is to forgive all.

Yet another value of this book is to open the door to further study. Many aspects of the subject, such as the Divided Personality, and the Will, are obviously dealt with briefly. Only the bare bones are shown. Many will want to go on and clothe them with flesh. The same may be said of the thumbnail sketches of famous personalities, illustrating the points made. They are almost teasing in their brevity, and will lead some to find out more about them.

As Mr. Melvin says, this study of the psychological basis of personality is only half the story. The structure and the working of our bodies form the second half. It is equally interesting as it is displayed in the

different human types, and as it is altered by hereditary and acquired disease, and by accident. This aspect has been dealt with admirably by Professor V. H. Mottram in his book *The Physical Basis of Personality* (Pelican Series).

The reader now has available this complementary study in the psychology of personality; a book which will amply repay both the student and the general reader.

DOUGLAS ROBB, M.D., F.R.C.S.

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## PREFACE

‘That shadow, my likeness that goes to and fro seeking  
a livelihood, chattering, chaffering,  
How often I find myself standing and looking at it  
where it flits;  
How often I question and doubt whether that is  
really me.’

THIS book proposes a lantern for the modern Diogenes in search of himself.

The best thing about such a search is that every man is of engrossing interest to himself. The worst is that it can be successful; so that thereafter it is difficult to esteem one’s self as highly as one would wish.

In our efforts to build a new order of society there is on all hands evidence of an inveterate inconsequence which scamps human values for material, engrossed with bricks-and-mortar thinking to the despite of man himself, for whom community now plans so much. The notion that improved machines demand improved men does occur here and there, but somewhat surreptitiously. Altogether too many of our resounding programmes propose reconstruction as though that were practicable without deference to human nature.

What is here set down is therefore addressed to the central problem of our time—personal responsibility in a rehabilitated society. It is not necessary to start building from the top downwards, letting the reform of our thought wait upon that of material means. Nor

does recovery lie in the sedative of State bonanzas. Whitman placed the emphasis rightly: 'Produce greater persons. The rest will follow.'

That, of course, is easier said than done. Emerson used to believe that when the half-gods go, the gods arrive. We know now that the gods will not come unbidden.

The ikons of assured circumstance have fallen everywhere. Their empty plinths, however, are no deterrent to idolatry so long as the unshakable Ego commands obeisance.

Nevertheless, this is not a book of comstockery. It is a plea that we shall do more than deprecate the harnessing of Pegasus to a milk-float and Dobbin to the chariot of State. These calamitous misfits can scarcely be prevented until we understand why and in what men differ. Those with democracy on the brain will doubtless go on believing that Jack's as good as his master. But those who hold that a man's mental age should at least match his right to vote will continue to be interested in the making of mature personalities.

It will be a wry commentary on our intelligence if, having saved the world from a fate worse than death, we fail of the safeguard of promoting character rather than pretension. These chapters indicate where a man must look to assess character and diagnose pretensions.

Whatever difficulties lie in the way of self-analysis, they are less strenuous than Alekhine's last modification of the Queen's Pawn Gambit Declined. The methods of self-knowledge are no more exacting than Culbertson's employment of a Vienna Coup. Both of these systems are commonly negotiated by the inquiring layman.

Anthropometry—the method which affects to measure men—is still one of those abracadabras by which we pretend a science without a body of knowledge. The mensuration of character and personality cannot be undertaken with any exactitude while the Self is compounded of so many impalpables. ‘My name is Legion,’ said the man from out of the tombs, ‘for we are many.’ Therein lies all the contradiction of human personality.

Men have too often accepted their temperament in this life as Calvinists (so it is credibly reported) accept their destiny in the next: as something fixed by fiat from the beginning and wholly out of our power to modify or control. The Freudian approach is of this persuasion. It is determined in that it treats the problems of human behaviour with an inflexible conception of causality. Every human characteristic must have an antecedent cause outside conscious control.

The Adlerian system is as thoroughly libertarian. Man is not only born a *tabula rasa* whereupon he and his environment write his character: there are simply no such quanta as inborn traits of disposition.

To await the resolution of this historic dispute as to whether a man creates his personality or his personality the man, is to invite the fate of the deliberative ass of traditional philosophy which starved betwixt two bales of straw whose relative merits it could never determine.

The important point about nature and nurture and personality is that they create each other. If it be asked whether temperament can be changed, the reply is that they who will are constantly changing, steadily being modified and extended by internal factors and external influences.

Notwithstanding all this, the reader will not be

initiated into the mysteries of some system offering careers on easy terms. These chapters attempt only to analyse, identify and classify the mental and emotional factors of personality.

In any such inquiry, the pretentious and sometimes unintelligible jargon of professional psychology cannot always be dispensed with. Technical terms have a useful shorthand function. But little will be found to be in cypher. Nor is it proposed to hammer on the open doors of established psychological principles.

When Katherine Mansfield came to the last pages of her *Journal*, with that acuity of vision not uncommonly vouchsafed those whose end is near, she wrote: 'I want, by understanding myself to understand others. I want to be all that I am capable of becoming. This all sounds very strenuous and serious. But now that I have wrestled with it, it's no longer so. I feel happy—deep down. All is well.'

That is to fight a good fight, to keep the faith, and to finish the course with such honour as man may fairly aspire to.

Auckland  
New Zealand

KENNETH MELVIN



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## NOTE ON THE USE OF QUESTIONNAIRES

SINCE this is a book for the general reader, higher brows need not lift at the use of self-testing questionnaires. We all know that people vary greatly in the accuracy with which they can identify their motives and appraise their character. Complete insight is patently impossible since the Self is at once the source of knowledge and the seat of prejudice.

It will thus be understood that in any self-analysis, rationalization is the process of giving plausible, acceptable reasons for conduct and desire instead of the actual motivating causes. The thoughtful reader will not willingly deceive himself by cloaking actualities in favour of an unreal respectability.

The questionnaires have been framed to afford opportunity for progressive self-examination, and have been placed at the beginning of each chapter rather than the end so that the mind may not be predisposed by the text. It is not always easy to conceal the implication of questions. The reader is therefore reminded of the natural tendency toward such replies as might be thought to present one's self in favourable light. That would be to defeat our purpose. Since the inquisition is private, to dissemble is merely to cheat one's self. If the questions elicit answers which most nearly express unconstrained attitudes, they may indicate basic character traits. These in turn offer a key to personality. Thus it is hoped that the questionnaires will personalize the discussion.

Nor can it be pretended that any general rating-scale constitutes a Procrustean bed into which everyone can be fitted, either by stretching or squeezing. Purporting to be an Introduction to your Self, such questions may nevertheless be found relevant to the fuller delineation of character which must be sought by the adjunctive methods suggested throughout the book. Within the acknowledged limitations of the simple technique adopted, it should be possible to gain a self-analysis of some initial service.

The rating-scale at the end of each chapter affords a basis of comparison with that fictional person, the 'average man'. It is impossible to lay down standards of thought and conduct with any general sanction. Because personality is the result of adjustment to biological needs and social obligations, before we can indicate any precise standards of conduct and behaviour we must know something both of the man's race and habitat as well as his social *mores*.

Every community has its own norms. As Boring, Langfeld and Weld have pointed out, the weak ego-development of the Mountain Arapesh of New Guinea is opposed by the rampant individualism of the Esquimaux of Greenland.<sup>1</sup> Clearly no common basis of conduct could exist as between such extremes of society.

But since this is unlikely to be read either in New Guinea or in Greenland, we shall rest content with the commonly accepted ideals of the English-speaking world. It may reasonably be presumed that the reader eats neither beetles nor blubber, and owes his social status neither to a communal wife nor the ritual murder of his aged parents. Lacking equatorial ardour and polar frigidity, the reader's personality should find

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to Psychology*.

in these rating-scales neither too much nor too little.

A further complication of the introspective processes is that a man often does not know the truth about himself and his behaviour. Not unseldom he does not wish to know; there is a subconscious resistance to the truth. Men will confess to treason, arson, false teeth—even a toupee. But who will own to a lack of humour? Accordingly a variety of expedients must be employed if self-deception is to be circumvented.

The established testing techniques of Pressey, Kohs, Raubenheimer, Scott and Allport have their laboratory uses. But for non-academic study an alternative had to be found.

The physiological analysts might have been followed. These researchers have satisfied themselves, for example, that bad stammerers have an abnormally high concentration of carbon dioxide in the blood. The approach to this personality disturbance is thus by medication. But what of the stammerer whose unhappy condition is due to social maladjustment, and who makes his speech defect an escape mechanism to avoid difficult tasks or to excuse failure?

Or the reader might have been commended to keep a diary as a particularly revealing method of self-expression. But having seen what happened to the confessions of the redoubtable Pepys, despite his home-made shorthand and his trust in Magdalene College, one hesitates to revive from desuetude so compromising a method of personality-analysis.

Again, we might have embarked upon the troubled waters of intelligence tests, used so determinedly in combination with aptitude tests and medical investigation techniques. If, however, Bernard Shaw has never encountered an intelligence test by which he

could be distinguished from a moron, it gives us pause. Whether this is high recommendation or disparagement of such tests is beside the point.

Then there are the tests of emotion, employed mainly in the study of problem children. These certainly reveal the complexes under which the child labours, and pave the way for corrective treatment. By the use of questionnaires directed toward the emotions of fear, disgust, self-feeling, jealousy and sex, a useful diagnosis can be made of the various types of 'worriers'; viz. the suspicious, the nervous, the self-conscious, the melancholic and the hypochondriacal. But since the inmates of reform schools will scarcely be readers of a book on personality, these tests, too, have been resigned.

The well-known ethical discrimination tests might have been utilized. With their aid it would be comparatively simple to demonstrate that good men are merely prudent men. It is a familiar weakness of psychology to teach what everybody knows in language nobody understands.

All such testing techniques were rejected for one reason or another in favour of the simplest of all forms—the self-testing questionnaire. Should the reader be inclined to use these as he proceeds—if only in a mood of polite amusement—he may discover something to his advantage. If he be the accused giving evidence against himself, he is also judge and jury and probation officer as well.

Psychology has too often and too long been akin to Sir Ernest Benn's definition of politics: 'The art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it wrongly and applying unsuitable remedies.' Questionnaires do at least give one a chance to speak for one's self. The reader's findings will be his own, and his will be the remedies.



## CHAPTER I

### THE MEANING OF 'PERSONALITY'

'The secret of the universe, as by slow degrees it reveals itself to us, turns out to be—personality.'

JOHN COWPER POWYS

'The disease of the world is the disease of the individual personality. The war of nations is a magnification of the war of human instincts, human motives.'

KARL MENNINGER

LIKE a poem or a perfume, personality is easier to recognize than to define. To describe it by exemplification is often to illustrate obscurity by obscurity. Yet to fail to enclose one's subject within both a definition and a theory is to flout a useful convention which holds that a writer does not understand his matter until he can reduce it to simplicities.

The philosophers have touched personality lightly, but with their tantalizing ability to tell us the time by clocks that stopped long ago. Spurred by the dictum 'Know thyself', they have developed only a limitless capacity for mystifying exposition. For example, it avails us little to be told by Locke that by 'personality' is meant the state of being a person; and by 'person' he means 'a thinking, intelligent being that has reason and reflection and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places'.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Essay Concerning Human Understanding.*

Such verbal counters can only be handed over to those pindaric book-keepers, the semanticists. These metaphysical frolics are satisfactory only to those for whom the form of a definition is more important than its content.

The dramatists are in no better countenance. When Lear asks 'Who is that can tell me who I am?' the Fool answers, 'Your shadow.'

Physiologists make a braver showing. They define man as an arithmetical sum, analysing him into the atoms of Democritus, the particles of Newton, and the elements of Berzelius. What is man, that thou art mindful of him? water, fats, carbon, phosphorus, iron, lime, magnesium, sulphur. The little more—how much it is! They have left out Personality. This is the roguery of alchemy.

What of the politicians, for whom personality is the integer of success in the business of pelting for the public good? Whenever Baldwin, as Prime Minister, had to appoint someone to a post, he would first try to discover whether the candidate had 'it', though he does not appear to have defined what he meant by this much-abused symbol. Apparently he had in mind what ordinary people call personality. For Baldwin it was more important than mere knowledge or professional qualifications. He knew that 'it' enables a man to inspire those among whom he works, and that it gives the man himself an enthusiasm which neither industry nor mere interest in the job can replace.<sup>1</sup> This is not a bad working definition of personality, however the conduct of politicians may fill us with doubt and dizziness.

The poet's concern, it is said, is not to save the soul

<sup>1</sup> *Love for a Country*, Rom Landau.

of man, but to make it worth saving.<sup>1</sup> Again it is not clear whether by 'soul' is meant 'human personality', but W. H. Auden has a definition for it. The least unsatisfactory description of anything, he writes, is that it is good when it discharges its proper function, using its powers to the fullest extent permitted by its environment and its own nature. Thus, people are happy and good who have found their vocation: a personality is good and useful when it has reached a state of equilibrium with its environment.

If nurtured in Iraq, a man will achieve that happy state with four wives, and his proprietorial personality will see nothing censurable in concubinage. Another, who lives among the Ladakh clans of Tibet, he himself one of several polyandrous husbands, must develop a subordinate personality. In a world of sundered societies in different stages of development, there can obviously be no stereotyped definition of personality. Quite clearly the word has different meanings on Grub Street, Wall Street, Main Street, and in the desert or the jungle. Its essence is not to be found by reference to books, or biology, or babbity.

Definition is, of course, the traditional province of the logicians. But under the appropriate heading in a modern textbook one encounters a learned disquisition about the number of dorsal teeth possessed by prawns, and much play with De Vries's discovery of the number of clover flowers having raised florets.<sup>2</sup> All of which is directed to the point that there are two kinds of definition (a) the *genetic* and (b) the *substantial*.

A *genetic* definition describes the mode of production of the thing in question. Accordingly we must find out how personality originates, develops and matures.

<sup>1</sup> *Modern British Poetry*, James Elroy Flecker.

<sup>2</sup> *Textbook of Logic*, Prof. A. Wolf, p. 179.

A *substantial* definition is a description of what the thing is in itself. We shall therefore analyse human personality in search of its component elements.

#### A GENETIC DEFINITION

How did the word 'personality' originate? In the Roman theatre, the mask worn by the players was called a *persona*. When Jung was casting about for a suitable term for the mask men wear among their fellows—their conscious personality—he fell back upon this expression. There is more than a dramatist's authority for regarding all the world as a stage, and all the men and women as players. Only the insane do not bother to don a mask among their fellows, and it is a truism that lunatics are bereft of personality. They possess no unified, coherent and controlled Self.

If our modern word does in fact stem from the Latin *persona*, then on Jung's view we have both a definition and a theory as to personality.<sup>1</sup> There is the mask, and the man who wears it: the front he presents to the world, and the Self which lies behind it. Personality thus becomes the outward expression of the inward character. It will scarcely be the whole Self; it will be that expression of the Self which society approves. The mask may or may not be like the man behind it. Our personality may or may not be a true reflection of our character.

This use of the term 'mask' for the personality need excite no recoil. It predicates neither guile nor duplicity when a man in evening clothes assumes different manners of speech and conduct from those into which he slips with his workaday wear. The

<sup>1</sup> *Contributions to Analytical Psychology.*

exigencies of formal occasions cannot be served by the unbuttoned mood of the family fireside. Varying social situations demand of us varying behaviour patterns, varying facets of personality. The pomp of the Lord Mayor's Procession is shed with the gaudy garb of office, leaving behind an altogether different personality, who is not thereby to be regarded as hypocritical because he has been different.

No one of us is consistently the same on all occasions. Bodily factors, mental and emotional states are subjective elements in the kaleidoscope called 'personality', presenting new 'masks' to new occasions.

Winston Churchill will hardly be deemed a Vicar of Bray because he has worn any number of masks in the sense here suggested. The shifts of that nimble mind and the expression of that colourful personality over the past thirty years reveal a positive repertoire of 'faces'. His is too vigorous a personality to admire slavish consistency. In a political career more full of vicissitude than any since Bolingbroke, he climbed the ladder through all Parties, without ever becoming demagogue or sycophant. Lady Oxford's biography presents a vastly different Winston from the one who appears in the Lloyd George Memoirs, or in Viscount Cecil's, or William Gallagher's.

There are, then, no dubious implications in this definition of personality as the mask we assume. It simply means that we do in different situations act and speak differently; we do not and dare not disclose our heart upon our sleeve; the varieties of social experience create the forms of expression we permit our true and inner Self.

The theory implicit therein is that behind the conscious mask we assume, stands the undeclared Self. There is a difference between personality and character;

a difference of seeming and reality. It is therefore possible to have personality without character, though scarcely character without personality. Character is adjudged 'good' or 'bad'; whereas personality is customarily classified as 'strong' or 'weak'.

Upon this dichotomy, pessimism has made over-much play. Stephen Spender expresses it thus:<sup>1</sup>

'Central "I" is surrounded by "I eating",  
 "I loving", "I angry", "I excreting",  
 But the "great I" planted within  
 Has nothing to do with all these.'

This is psychologically inaccurate. The great 'central I' has much to do with all the satellite persons who perform his behests. This will have fuller exposition in its proper place. At the moment we are considering only a genetic definition; one which describes the mode of origin of personality.

Dr. William Brown prefers to regard the *persona* as the valid self. 'Although the word itself suggests drama, even melodrama, pretence, hypocrisy, and the like, nevertheless when we come to consider the ordinary use of language we find that people who are regarded as having personality are just the opposite of this. They are not people who play a part. They are people who are genuine, who really believe in what they work and live for. They are people who have taken a definite line of their own. They work out and achieve a certain degree of originality; they do not wear a mask, they are themselves.'<sup>2</sup>

But is not this view of human nature a mere psychological abstraction? Do we not find in fact and experience that however innocent men may be of

<sup>1</sup> *Poems*.

<sup>2</sup> *Personality and Religion* (University of London Press).

pretext, however essentially sincere their character, the exactions of social living do find them wearing just those 'masks' implied in the Latin derivative?

At all events we shall here treat the dramatic sense of personality in the popular sense if only to avoid that preoccupation with the strictly scientific which makes textbooks on psychology so unenlightening on the subject of personality. If it is to shed its often dreariness and unrelation to reality, professional psychology must learn more from dramatists and novelists. Freud's 'depth psychology' has certainly moved in this desirable direction. Repressions are too much with us, waking and sleeping, to ignore the contribution of dramatists and novelists, whose empiricism is more discerning than academic formalism.

#### A SUBSTANTIAL DEFINITION

Here we seek a description of what the thing is in itself. The components of personality are taken to be: (a) disposition; (b) temperament; (c) mood; (d) the will.

##### (a) *Disposition*

We need not digress into the ancient and still moot question as to what the new-born child brings into the world with him. By successive erosions, the original quantum of 'innate' things has been reduced wellnigh to vanishing-point. A recent opinion summarized by Dr. W. E. Blatz is that the child inherits only the minimum number of organized instincts necessary to maintain life under favourable conditions, plus consciousness, into which and by which he builds the edifice of learned experience.<sup>1</sup> At the moment, then, the balance lies with nurture rather than nature. It will be argued here that personality is almost wholly

<sup>1</sup> *Understanding the Young Child*, p. 30.

acquired. What a man is in maturity is never the result entirely of heredity or of environment; but is rather the reciprocal of the two. But insofar as his hereditary equipment is now held to be so meagre, the importance attaching the environmental factors is obvious. It is through nurture and self-training that the individual reaches whatever heights or depths of character life holds for him.

On this view, disposition is the bent and bias of inherited instincts. Since each instinct has its accompanying emotion, disposition is also the emotional pattern of the man. The emotion is the discernible part of disposition, so that when we speak of a person as being of a timid, or an irascible or an inquisitive disposition we mean that he is specially liable to evince the emotions of fear, anger, or curiosity. Or reversing the process, noting that a person is prone to show fear, or anger, or curiosity, we say of him that he has such and such a disposition.

The ego-sentiment, master-sentiment in human personality, is formed very early in childhood; usually before the age of seven. Later experience will modify or accentuate a man's inborn disposition by affecting his sentiments, which are the organizers and controllers of his emotions. But the development of personality can be stated briefly thus. To our inherited modicum of instincts we begin from infancy to add acquired character. The primal emotions with which a babe greets the world are soon organized around sentiments. If he is loved intelligently, his emotions soon take on the system of the prevailing sentiment of his environment. An inborn disposition of fearfulness may speedily be modified round the maternal love sentiment. Or an unruly and aggressive disposition may be integrated round the unchecked ego-sentiment till the



child's disposition becomes progressively more arrogant. In quite natural ways the disposition is conditioned into fixity.

Mr. Micawber was sanguine by disposition, incoherent in his sentiments and undeterred by experience. Mr. Scrooge was mean by disposition, rigid in his sentiments and unredeemed by experience until a dream analysis changed his entire personality. Dickens himself organized his own disposition in the gloomy tunnel of poverty, hunger and lost childhood. To say that he was 'born with a tender heart' means only that his disposition was indomitable.

That emotions and dispositions are inborn has been shown by Dr. Karl Menninger, whose clinical experience indicates that the child begins life in the emotion of anger.<sup>1</sup> From the tideless peace of pre-natal existence he is launched painfully into a world of uncomfortable and terrifying experiences. He expresses his emotions from the very first moment of separate life. Henceforward, his emotions will condition his personality, deepen its feeling, increasing or diminishing his attractiveness to others. It is on the measure of his emotional control that his disposition will depend.

Disposition can therefore be defined as the tendency of our sentimental and emotional life.

#### (b) *Temperament*

Unlike disposition, temperament is determined more by internal than by external influences; and is governed to a greater extent by inheritance. Broadly speaking, temperament is the resultant of all the chemical influences of the bodily organism upon our mental life. Less modifiable by training than disposition, temperament is largely a matter of bodily constitution. But

<sup>1</sup> *Love and Hate*, p. 9.

it would not be correct to attribute it entirely to physical heredity.

William Morris inherited from his father a weak and neurotic strain, yet achieved great vigour and strength of character, and a temperament superior to a faulty inheritance and a hostile environment. Havelock Ellis has shown innumerable examples of such temperamental control throughout life.<sup>1</sup> To-day, faulty glandular balance can be dealt with therapeutically, so that our bodily chemistry—the basis of temperament—is not wholly determined by the accident of birth.

Where disposition supplies the warmth and colour of our personality, temperament is its very fabric.

### (c) *Mood*

Moods vary from fleeting catspaws upon the surface, to veritable storms of emotion. By their frequency and intensity, our moods do much to determine the impression of our personality upon our fellows.

These shadows upon the soul's substance arise from the emotions. In common speech the moods are, in fact, described by adjectives derived from the names of the various emotions; e.g. angry or pugnacious or affectionate moods. They are commonly due to the evocation of an emotion which fails of complete expression and dissipation. A man provoked to anger at the office may find it expedient to conceal his annoyance, but will go home in an angry, disturbed mood. The repressed emotion may disappear under more pleasant circumstances, particularly if he has an equable temperament. Or the emotion may smoulder, ready to flare up at some further provocation. Should he be temperamentally irascible he will arrive home in the

<sup>1</sup> *A Study of British Genius*, p. 208.

mood to kick the cat, scold the children and quarrel with his wife.

We might well recognize mood for what it is, all too often a matter of physical unfitness. To fail to ascribe moods to their proper cause is to mistake elements of interior upset for evidence of a malevolent destiny. What may appear to be an obdurate universe may be nothing more than a sluggish alimentary canal.

(d) *The Will*

The subject of the Will is considered in Chapter IX, where it is submitted that the older theories of volition as a 'faculty' of the personality are so much untenable mysticism.

One retraces in vain the historic search for a faculty of will; Wundt's laboratory studies, Kulpe's methods of controlled introspection as developed by Ach and Michotte, the psycho-galvanometric records used in differentiating between 'willing' and 'striving', and the Downey Will-Temperament tests. All have failed to reveal any such entity.

It is here advanced that will-power consists in established habit-patterns, and that Will itself is directly created by our behaviour. A strong Will is the product of disciplined habits, not the vice versa. Conversely, we can create of our habits conspirators against firmness of purpose.

The point pertinent to our search for definitions is that the pursuit of some mysterious faculty of Will having proved illusory, all systems of Will-training which propose to rely upon some strenuous concentration of the mind are psychologically unsound. The strong personality owes its strength not to some divine spark implanted by fortuitous circumstance; weakness of will cannot be excused by some dereliction of

stepmotherly nature. Our Will is what we make it, nor is it made by the clever practice of some tricky system. It reposes in ordered habits of mind and body.

Not that a strong will is therefore intrinsically good and desirable. Will is but a means to an end—character. If it be a will-to-power its disproportion becomes despotism; if it is a will-to-virtue that becomes disbalanced, the end is priggishness at best and at worst the Holy Inquisition; should it be unbridled will-to-possess, it distorts into miserliness. But in all these examples of strong will as the means, the will itself is created and fortified by habit-systems and behaviour-patterns.

If this be true, a man's personality is in his own keeping. He is intemperate or lazy or libidinous because he wills so to be. His sanctioned habits have made him so. No stress on social conditioning can support the view that man is purely the creature of circumstance. Such creatures do exist, but they are something less than men. Should we be quarrelsome or despondent or recessive it can only be because we enjoy quarrelling or being defeatist or self-pitying. This is the way we prefer to be, Will to be, and that is the way we are. We 'Will' the personality that is ours.

#### IS THE WILL FREE?

If this appears to beg the question, let it be said that I am not unaware of the arguments for determinism. A man cannot escape his biological inheritance. Defective heredity can be a hound of hell forever baying at a man's heels, possibly to pull him down on occasions. The genes, 'strung like beads along the line of the chromosomes' are the raw materials of our physiology. And it seems that there

are gene combinations for bad temper and sadism just as there are for carrotty hair and hammertoes. But whether evil temper and sadism shall develop and become paramount in personality rests with volition to a very considerable extent.

A man cannot control the colour of his hair nor the shape of his toes. But the fact that he can control the incidence of his mood and temper or the development of cruelty in his character is the point here at issue. In matters of personality the argument is heavily weighted toward self-determinism. As Dr. Johnson liked to say: 'All theory is against the freedom of the Will, and all experience for it.'

Unfortunately, too much aspiration is founded upon theological abstractions rather than upon temporal practicalities. Given counsels of performance rather than counsels of perfection, man may make his personality as he will.

It has been noted that psycho-analysis is wholly determinist in arguing that the Will is controlled by non-rational forces which lie for the most part below the threshold of consciousness, and whose genesis we do not know and whose effect upon life we cannot calculate.

Very impressive it all is too. How did Freud come to this mechanist view? His incorrigible habit of taking man to pieces and then representing him as the mere sum of the parts took no account of the one thing that is impervious to analysis . . . human Will. Because human personality is the elusive Self which itself inheres in the parts but is not a part but the whole, science is disabled from giving a full and complete account of it. Because the human Will slipped through his analytic net, Freud did not believe that it existed in any free and independent sense. Examine his

collected works and you will find in the index no mention whatever of 'Will'; and what he has to say about 'volition' lies within the space of a single paragraph.

That psycho-analysis failed to isolate and measure Will does not disprove its existence nor negate its freedom. Freud and all who came after with the purely scientific approach were looking for the wrong thing in the wrong place. This is one of the distinctive contributions of Behaviourism to psychological knowledge. Will is therein seen to repose in ordered patterns of habit.

From quite another approach, Bergson has stated the case for Freewill with great charm and cogency.<sup>1</sup> Summarized, it may be stated thus: when the personality is analysed, each part of it—disposition, character, temperament, mood, emotion and Will—appears to be causally related to and dependent on each other part. Every phase of character which the personality reflects is the product of itself, its past phases. Each act by which the personality expresses itself is therefore determined only by its own previous activity.

This is neither determinism nor libertarianism. It is self-determinism. The personality can be shown to be a continuous and indivisible stream of consciousness, and it is precisely when it is seen as such—and not a succession of isolated incidents—that it is perceived as free and undetermined save by itself.

No brief summary can hope to do justice to the nobility of Bergson's thought, but perhaps it is all contained in Joad's survey: 'Seen as a whole, life is a creative activity, and its nature therefore is to be free and to create the future.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Creative Evolution*.

<sup>2</sup> *Guide to the Philosophy of Morals and Politics*, p. 258.

The uncompromising determinist may now set this book aside, for its central position is that no environment can forever shape one who will not be so shaped. I am free if only I know it and act upon it. As Plato saw, true knowledge compels action.

'I can be whatever I will to be; I turn my opened eyes on my Self and possess whatever I desire.'<sup>1</sup>

#### AN EMPIRICAL DEFINITION

Perhaps the most persuasive description of personality lies in human experience. We commence our career with blitheness of spirit, for everything—social contacts, family, ambition, business, leisure, achievement—holds promise. We are conscious of reserves within us constantly stimulating interest which not even the discipline of study can dull. We are alive, and know it, feel it.

But somewhere along the line the fires of interest die down; we know now our limitations and accept our place; life no longer enlarges. It may be the soporific of success, or the deadening disappointment of failure. It may be mental laziness or ill health. But slowly, insensibly, life has lost its savour. We no longer sparkle; we are a disappointment to ourselves; our personality turns inwards and becomes recessive. It is not difficult to feel with Schopenhauer and Spengler that life itself is the fraud. Our associates now out-distance us, and our friendships falter and fall out. Business becomes routine and marriage something to be borne.

What has happened? The change is subjective; personality is no longer in the making. Is it possible to detect in advance this hardening of the mental

<sup>1</sup> *Elmer Gantry*, Ch. XVI, Sinclair Lewis.

arteries? More importantly, can anything corrective be done in and through self-examination? Can introspection reveal the deciduous personality?

Frustration, aimlessness, frivolity, boredom, sloth and failure cannot be exorcised by exhortation. The character we want cannot be bought and it cannot be bargained for. It cannot even be glimpsed by those for whom success lies in the abundance of things possessed.

If a man's inner eye, the Third Eye of Siva, has lost its vision; if his character no longer has anything of aspiration; if his inner Self and his personality are fixed and petrous, his desk paperweight should be a skull—newly bleached.

#### SUMMARY

Though definitions are dangerous, define our terms we must. When we attempt the meaning of personality, philosophy speaks of consciousness, literature spans the mind, science analyses the body, politics weighs its dominance, poetry perceives its emotional colour. This is a functional definition; a statement of its manifestations.

The word itself indicates its connotation. It is the mask we present to our fellows at various times and in divers circumstances.

Our personality is as characteristic as the clothes we wear, the manners we adopt, and the activities we pursue. The complicated business of living itself requires of us a number of roles. Personality is developed as our means of facing the world, forming friendships, earning our livelihood and discharging our duties.

Born with a native disposition made up of a few primal instincts and their accompanying emotions, we gradually organize our inner life into groups of



sentiments, which in turn coalesce into our temperament. As environment affects and conditions us, all these elements are integrated into our basic character.

Character now determines what front we shall assume—our personality. The determinant throughout this long process is the Will, whereby our personality is the outward appearance and expression of our inner Self. Into character we build the elements of inheritance and the habits we acquire. By deliberative choice we compound personality.

Its function is to maintain liaison between the Self and society. It expresses man to his community and interprets the world without to the world within the Self. Personality is thus the instrument of ambition and achievement, desire and fulfilment; the essential factor of success—or failure—of the man in his world.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER II

#### I

1. *Are you (A) impulsive; or (B) do you always consider consequences?* .....
2. *Can you (A) co-operate readily with others in your work and play; or (B) do you prefer individual activity on your own?* .....
3. *Are you (A) more interested in everyday things, such as food, cinemas, sports, clothes, parties, public functions, etc.; or (B) is your interest more in abstract things, ideas, books, a quiet evening at home, solitude rather than company?* .....
4. *In preparing a report or writing an important letter, do you (A) write quickly without revision or search for words; or (B) re-write and alter, choosing phrases after careful reflection?* .....
5. *Have you (A) a warm-hearted relationship with your family and fellow-employees or business associates; or (B) a cautious, self-possessed and formal attitude?* .....
6. *Do you (A) feel and appear natural when introduced to strangers; or (B) are you shy and reserved?* .....

7. Do you (A) take things as they come, and live for the day; or (B) do you worry about the future, a prey to hope and fear? .....
8. Do you (A) compromise to accommodate the ideas and preferences of others; or (B) do you firmly retain your own ideas and ways, preferring to stand out rather than adjust yourself to others? .....
9. Do you possess (A) a marked sense of humour, enjoying the telling and hearing of jokes; or are you (B) uncomfortable in telling a joke and bored by those who enjoy this sort of thing? .....

## II

1. Do you tend to see (A) the serious side of life, the possibility of sickness, and loss and failure; or (B) the optimistic, hope-for-the-best side, refusing to worry unduly? .....
2. Are you (A) calm and cool when others become excited and agitated; or (B) are you easily upset, affected by the emotions and fears of others? .....
3. Do you find yourself (A) tending towards sarcasm and scepticism, apt to decry others and minimize their efforts; or (B) tending mostly to a non-critical, easy acceptance of others at their face-value? .....
4. Do you (A) idealize your relationships with wife, family and friends, indulging terms of affection freely; or (B) are you reserved rather than affectionate, practical rather than romantic, matter-of-fact rather than idealistic? .....

5. *Are you inclined to be (A) argumentative and assertive, or (B) complaisant, and anxious to please others?* .....
6. *Have you (A) any poetic or artistic capacity; or (B) do you find no interest in such things?* .....
7. *Have you (A) a few select close friends; or (B) a large number of acquaintances, all more or less equally close to you?* .....
8. *Can you stand (A) a fair amount of alcohol without showing signs of it, retaining your good manners and self-control; or (B) does alcohol affect you to hearty good fellowship, boisterous fun and singing?* .....
9. *In your reading, do you (A) prefer books about abstract ideas, character-studies, psychological novels and so on; or (B) do you prefer adventure, travel, action-stories and practical affairs?* .....

## III

1. *Can you hear music inwardly as a memory; i.e. can you carry a tune?* .....
2. *Is your memory for scents, perfumes and smells good?* .....
3. *Is your sense of taste capabl. of distinguishing China tea from Indian, sirloin beef from topside, brown bread from wholemeal?* .....
4. *Do you play any musical instrument requiring refinement of touch?* .....
5. *Do you feel jarred and outraged when you hear discords?* .....
6. *Have you a good colour-sense? i.e. can you detect slight shades of differences?* .....

7. *Are you conscious of 'hunches' which often turn out to be correct and sound?* .....
8. *Are you specially perceptive of insincerity or deceit in others?* .....
9. *Do you find that you are able to work out logical problems, conundrums, brain-teasers, etc., quickly?* .....
10. *Can you analyse your own inner motives and impulses with ease?* .....
11. *Are you a good card-player? or a good chess-player?* .....
12. *Have you an appreciation of fine art in pictures, sculpture, ceramics, architecture, etc.?* .....

## CHAPTER II

### ANALYSING YOUR TEMPERAMENT

‘Trying to see your Self is like trying to turn up the gas quick enough to see how the darkness looks.’

WILLIAM JAMES

THE study of human temperaments is at once one of the oldest and one of the latest interests of the inquiring mind.

But just as the Self eluded even the ingenious Greeks, so it evades us for precisely the reason suggested by William James. Even psycho-analysis in its cunning endeavours to catch the Self unawares is baffled by the Censor. Perhaps the most practical approach to the analysis of temperament is by the methods of Analytical Psychology. With Jung’s personality-types as a guide, we may achieve a not improbable Self-portrait.

But if we are to avoid misrepresentation as having no special sense in it, our self-analysis must have more truth-telling than is, with the well-thought of, an habitual form of indulgence. Deceit is not beyond cure, particularly if we remember that Jung’s scheme calls for psychological, not ethical self-judgement.

#### ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Jung’s classification of temperaments is useful because it identifies observable characteristics of the Self, and at a number of specific points.

All save those who are too proud to inspect their ignoble selves stand to profit from this personal inquiry. Rare is the person who can accurately answer such questions as:

‘What do I get most excited about?—and why?’

‘What do I feel most particularly certain about? and how did I start feeling so?’

‘By what felicitous combination of flattery, self-esteem and Divine favour do I find myself so highly commendable?’

An immense amount of domestic and public friction would be avoided were the habit cultivated of allowing for fluctuations of temperament in ourselves and in others. A great many of the acidulous utterances we make it a point of honour to stand by—or never forgive—are merely the result of liver, fatigue, indigestion or hyper-thyroidism.

‘My soul is dark with stormy riot  
Directly traceable to diet.’

Herein lies a special merit of Analytical Psychology. It rationalizes much of our emotional and temperamental instability. It may be an unamiably diagnostic of inner contradictions, but at least it exposes the fatal tendency to contract our convictions—like a cold in the head—from our near neighbours. Self-analysing is at least in the direction of truth as distinct from the unexigent virtues of politeness.

Nor need the inquiry be loaded with the complicated adjuncts of the entire system elaborated by Jung. Sufficient to bear in mind that temperament is ‘the resultant of all the chemical influences of the body upon our mental life’, and that the classification of temperament rests upon the pattern of our mental activities. In other words, the four principal mental

functions, sensation, feeling, thinking and intuition, govern our temperament, as they in turn are affected by it.

(1) *Sensation*. Throughout our waking experience the senses are busy, our attention conditioned by the number stimulated, and their intensity. When, for instance, the sensation of touch, taste, smell, temperature, pressure and vision combine in osculation, with every avenue to and from the Self thrown open, the office of sensation needs no laboured exposition.

(2) *Feeling*. Not a few of our troubles arise from feeling when we should think, and vice versa. For example, there is Mr. A who dislikes Jewish refugees so intensely; and Miss B who gets so excited about the waywardness of the nation's young womanhood; and Mrs. C who so detests 'socialism'. As Oscar Wilde has it: 'The advantage of the emotions is that they lead us astray.'<sup>1</sup> Not even paradox can conceal the unreliability of the emotions as a guide to sound judgement.

(3) *Thinking*. We defer to the cerebrum in such questions as to whether Charlotte Corday in killing Marat in his bath, was or was not a murderess. What sort of decision we reach will be not unconnected with our temperament. In such issues as the sheeting home of war-guilt and the punishment of war criminals the great difficulty has always been to keep the mental processes untangled with those of emotion and feeling.

(4) *Intuition*. A not inconsiderable number of our conclusions are mistakenly credited to logical rather than intuitive processes. Nor are they less fashionable on that account. If our novelists are to be believed,

<sup>1</sup> *Picture of Dorian Gray*, Ch. III.



women employ few mental functions save those of sensation and intuition.

It was the latter which brought the Duke of Wellington to his knees before de la Cuesta on the eve of Talavera; a means of effecting co-operation made somewhat easier because he was not yet a duke. But this was almost the only exercise of irrationality in that long and distinguished career.

In Bergson's vitalist philosophy intuition is accorded primacy over intellect as the faculty by which we realize the nature of reality. But in Jung's classification it occupies a subordinate role as a lesser form of apprehension. It is thus that we shall here consider it.

Analytical psychology takes these four basic mental processes as a framework for the analysis of temperament. Jung regards sensation and intuition as 'irrational' processes, on a lower level of mental activity than those of thinking and feeling. Agreement is provoked by those who can discern the whole history and destiny of mankind in the Great Pyramid. These seers can scarcely achieve this *tour de force* by the pedestrian processes of logicity.

The important thing is to disentangle our own mental processes, realizing when and where each is operative. The cheiro-analysts, nostradamians, the Mother Shiptons, and the decoders of dreams may move in a sphere superior to the laws of logic. The case for syllogistic anarchy was never more persuasively presented than by Lewis Carroll. But until such time as the world is convinced, our mental processes must be bound by dull rationality. Sensation and intuition have their offices largely because human personality is itself so inconsequent. The potency of faith still holds sway over large areas of human relationships, say Whitehead and Russell what they will.

The awkwardness of it all is that faith may safely be exercised only by those whose knowledge renders it superfluous.

In Jung's scheme, these four main processes of sensation, feeling, thinking and intuition, are not only admitted, but are further divisible, giving in all eight types of temperament. A man may be 'introverted' in his mental processes, or 'extroverted'. The extrovert is essentially sociable, making friends with facility, and finding pleasure in a variety of social activities. He takes life easily on the whole, tending to live for the moment, giving free expression to his emotions. He is a man of action rather than reflection, and is motivated more by external things than inner ideas. He is a good clubman, takes a prominent part in patriotic drives and street appeals, and makes an excellent contact-man in business.

The introvert, on the other hand, lives more within himself, joins groups with reluctance, and is outwardly unemotional. He thinks and reads a good deal, has considerable imagination, and is more prone to moods. He is often out of adjustment with his environment; sees issues as complicated and difficult, rather than simple matters of right or wrong, good or bad.

In this system, then, we may have an introvert-thinking type and an extrovert-thinking type; an introvert-feeling type and an extrovert-feeling type, and so on for the other processes of sensation and intuition, making in all eight groups. Most of us manifest features of both introversion and extroversion, but with a characteristic predisposition toward one or the other. There are few if any one hundred per cent extroverts or introverts. We are, all of us, dispositional mixtures. Clearly, it will be most useful if we can so analyse ourselves as to determine which type of

temperament we do, in fact, possess. Nowhere in personal relationships is it more useful to be forewarned—and forearmed—than in respect to temperament.

(1) *The Extrovert-thinking type*

This person accumulates *facts* when he wants to make a decision. He has the greatest possible respect for costs and figures and estimates. He does not rely upon ‘hunches’ or crystal-gazing. His thought processes are impersonal and constructive. He may be a politician of the Ernest Bevin type, a natural scientist like Huxley, a physicist like Einstein. From this type at its most effective levels come the successful financiers, lawyers, architects, engineers and ranking ecclesiastics: the Pierpont Morgans, Marshall Halls, Henry Fords and Field Marshal Montgomerys.

Because of its inflexible judgements, when this temperament is extreme it is apt to be dogmatic, resolute under opposition, and of the ‘magnetic personality’ ilk. With these, feeling is carefully repressed. Hence there is often scant sympathy for others unless they conform.

The less-developed extrovert-thinkers are marked by a tendency toward tabloid-ideas; what Walter Lippman calls ‘pictures in the head’. This mental trick originates in the characteristic dependence upon external facts rather than inner reflection; in the tendency toward simplification and the habit of reducing judgement to a formula. Perhaps this explains why so many run-of-the-mill politicians are extrovert thinkers. Clichés and shibboleths are made to do duty for solid thinking and logical reasoning. Admittedly, the effect can be miraculous, as when several hundred thousand stand in the Red Square and vote enthusiastically for something they don’t quite catch.

But when such bromide-thinking is predominant, the impoverishment to the personality is incalculable.

In between these two extremes march a great mass of normal, healthy citizens who prefer to let the world go by rather than develop any heat about it one way or another.

## (2) *The Introvert-thinking type*

With his strongly subjective bias, the introverted thinker is more absorbed in theories than in facts. He may display intellectual arrogance no less than his opposite number, the extrovert-thinker. He may tend to tactlessness because, as often as not, he lacks intuitive feeling. His coldness keeps him aloof.

If he passes through the discipline of academic study, he is prone to substitute intellectual assertion for practical-mindedness. His thinking tends to be speculative and theoretical. He has a yen for blue-prints and plans for world-order; likes to be philosophical and speculative; has liberal views on most things and opinions on everything.

With his passion for encyclopedic outlines, novels-of-the-future, and the rights-of-men, H. G. Wells was a typical introvert thinker. So too would classify his co-prophet, so neatly annihilated by H. H. Munro: 'Sherard Blaw, the dramatist who had discovered himself, and who had given so ungrudgingly of his discovery to the world.'<sup>1</sup>

This is one of the mental quirks of the introvert-thinker, who, being eminently introspective, more interested in the abstract than the concrete, and usually of a higher level of intelligence, feels it incumbent upon himself to lighten the general darkness. When this is

<sup>1</sup> *The Unbearable Bassington.*

an expression of genius we can be grateful. But when this patronizing manner is unaccompanied by any great mental distinction it is merely tiresome.

Even at that, perhaps it is better to be critical than comatose.

### (3) *The Extrovert-feeling type*

Again, the more extreme forms of this temperament are illustrative. Colonel X who wants to save India by hanging Gandhi as high as Haman. Mr. Y who wants to give all ex-Servicemen practically everything but *droit de seigneur*. Mrs. Z who takes an instant and invariable dislike to all her daughter's young men. These are the folk who wear their emotions upon their sleeve. They throb with the world's full heart and have only to be confronted with an injustice and they shout 'To the barricades!'

In a world of inhumanity, of such are the kingdom of heaven. It is fortunate for lost causes that such temperaments exist. Mr. 'Pussyfoot' Johnson gives his eye and finally his life in the struggle to make the world sober through Prohibition. To the modern mind there is something pathetic about these crusades. But we may be grateful for the temperament which is dominated by a social conscience, however untimely may be its programme.

The late Ignaz Paderewski was made President of the Polish State, not because he was an extraordinary pianist, which he certainly was; nor because he was an eminent statesman, which he certainly was not. It was because he was a great humanist. Such sensitive temperaments will, however, always be babes in the woods of power politics.

Those with the extrovert-feeling temperament make grand friends. They have the virtue of sympathy

in abundance, can give themselves without stint to needy situations, and are the salt of the earth's charities. God must have a special regard for them. He has made so many.

(4) *The Introvert-feeling type*

The air here is chilly. There is in such people little or no spontaneous combustion. This is the sort of fellow one knows all through life, yet never gets to know. Few ever come very close to them, somehow. They may smoulder, but they never burn; all emotion is assiduously stifled or restrained.

But beware the wrath of a patient man. When at last this type is roused, he is implacable, seldom forgives and never forgets. Some men are like this by nature, some achieve this stern self-control by training. Lawyers must for their profession's sake walk cat-footed through the world's troubles, reserving feeling and facing the facts as they are. Such men consume their own smoke. It is a fatal error to imagine that because they show no sign they therefore have no emotion whatever.

This sort of individual just doesn't believe that sympathy means that we should unbar the cages of all the zoo animals. At least, he doesn't plan to be around when it's done. His enthusiasms are under lock and key because he knows, possibly from bitter experience, how embarrassing they can be.

The introvert-feeling temperament makes a safe manager of a bank, or of a large and competitive industry. He is a sound trustee, a polite and tactful negotiator, has an excellent match-temperament, is not easily 'rattled' in an emergency, and is never found in a lynching party.

(5) *The Introvert-sensorial type*

Despite the difficulties of cramming men into ready-made moulds like these, it is worth while completing the scheme of Jung's temperament types. The reader will see the point that no individual fits snugly into any one pattern. But there are familiar elements which will serve to identify these personalities. When we say that men are 'born that way', all that we mean is that such people have not learned, or having learned have not troubled to modify their inheritance. The successful men in life are those who are not content with Nature's handiwork. A devout Huntingdonshire squire, no longer young, blossoms into one of the greatest military geniuses of history. A youthful judge who resigns his post rather than sentence a fellow-man to death, becomes immortal though he develops into a sincere fanatic of the French Terror. We recognize in Cromwell and Robespierre the sort of man who refuses to accept as mandatory the accidents of birth.

The man whose sense-experience is an intense inner awareness, gives his society surprises in abundance. He has a tremendous zest in life; a calculated pleasure in learning and mastering new interests. Poets, dramatists and artists may be thus grouped. Because both the mind and the emotions are vivid, they are intense, opinionated, extravagant in their enthusiasms, and subject to extreme likes and dislikes.

In their sensory experiences they are seldom catholic in taste. They will defend their preferences with fierce protagonism. But because they are sensitively 'alive', their enthusiasms undergo periodic change, as they themselves grow and develop. Who does not know the keen gramophile who graduates from Liszt's

angry clanging to the sweetness of the Classicists, and finally into the plangent disharmonies of the Moderns, defending each in turn with hot partisanship? At any given point in this evolution his scorn for anything else is a thing to be seen and heard.

Similarly in art and the drama, this type tends to take a pilgrimage of a thousand delights denied the less introverted individual. He has the knack of personalizing external things, so that a primrose by the river's brim, a primrose is to him—and a great deal more. Onlookers say he takes his pleasures sadly; a couple of hours of unrelieved chamber music, or an amateur passion for astronomy. Only he knows the compensations as indeed only he needs to know. The average listener hears Sibelius as one of the more pleasant moderns—and lets it go at that. But the introvert-sensorial prefers to trick out such music with a 'soul-of-a-people' programme. The introvert's imaginative processes must be served. Should he play 'Pohjola's Daughter', he demands that we listen first to the obscure narrative of 'The Kalevala'. He does not even notice how quickly we tire of trying to remember who Lemminkainen is, what he stands for, exactly why the maiden indulges in 'silvery laughter' and that we are plainly exhausted at the task of getting into communion with the incomprehensible mind of Sibelius.

The sensory-introvert is the fellow who champions Epstein. For him, 'Rima', the 'Rock Drill', 'The Carvings in Flenite' and all the rest are not mere hunks of stone or bronze pretty badly mauled, but exquisite forms of 'the balance of the parts', 'essential rhythms', 'subsidiary rhythms', the 'glyptic as opposed to the plastic', etc. etc. For the sensory-extrovert they may be little more than bestial figures



with the faces and heads of microcephalous idiots. But for the sensory-introverts they can be rapturous patterns of perfection.

To the average individual, Picasso's work is a gigantic hoax not yet exposed; a mass of incomprehensible interlocked and dislocated forms in which may be vaguely discerned a stretched mouth or an occluded eye, a pendulous pap or a foetal monstrosity. But the introvert-sensorial temperament may exult in it all as 'æsthetic perception', 'pure abstraction', 'trance-painting', and 'dream-visualization'. What are for the wholehearted sensory-extrovert mere lewd lavatory scrabbings, are for his opposite in temperament supreme expressions of the unconscious in imagery.

On a lowlier plane, the sensory-introvert takes to chess, while the extrovert yells his head off at football matches. The one finds relaxation in T. S. Eliot and W. H. Auden, the other in a hot bath. One likes to talk, and the other prefers shared silence. There can be no question of invidious comparisons. There is no good, better or best in this matter of temperament. A personality is good and useful, whether it be extroverted or introverted when it has reached equilibrium with its environment. All that can be enjoined is tolerance toward other types, and a watchful eye on one's own eccentricities.

#### (6) *The Extrovert-sensorial type*

Here is a more familiar personality. His pleasures are taken more vigorously. He appreciates second-class music and second-class women, but never second-class tobacco or second-rate horses. Here is the genial back-slapping club-man who topes rather than tastes his beer, who relishes risqué stories and an extensive wardrobe. He needs to be interested by others

because he has little self-resource. In fact, his life depends on what the world can do for him.. Left to himself he is bored. He demands that something shall be going on all the time, and has little patience with ideas or abstractions. He may like 'a good tune' as he calls it, but his jaw drops if you talk of the architectural in musical form. Should you suggest that his preference in wall-pictures could be better served by a camera, he doesn't even wish to know what you're driving at. Because his personal resources are slender, were he to elect his single piece of equipment for a desert island sojourn, he would plump unhesitatingly for a set of golf-clubs or a set of Balzac.

The sensory-extrovert is genial and well-meaning, but his indifference to tact can inflict great discomfiture by his boisterous tastes. With nature, he abhors a vacuum.

When this type becomes a politician, he likes to think of himself as a shrewd fellow with no nonsense about him. He scorns academic thought and polished manners. He distrusts the moderates and may easily become a bully. In business he is bustling and ruthless, carrying the rules of the scrum into most undertakings. Suspicious of anything he doesn't quite understand, he tends to be intolerant.

But because there are so many of him he is never without company, and most social organizations are glad to have such personalities at their head. We are indebted to such men for an enormous amount of the world's work.

#### (7) *The Introvert-intuitive type*

Here is the polar opposite of the sensory-extrovert. Preoccupied with his inner apprehensions, his inwardness sets him apart in a number of ways. He is as

sensitive as a bowl of mercury. Really front-rank musicians are of this type, able to project creative interpretations from their unconscious self into the external world. The blind develop along this pattern, since their concepts are dependent upon inner apprehension. Dr. Crichton-Miller quotes Cameron, the boatman in Barrie's '*Mary Rose*', as an excellent picture of the intuitive introvert. Celts traditionally have this faculty of being 'fey'. Where others must see and touch and hear to understand, these people are intuitively aware of much more than can come to us through the bodily senses.

In the workaday world, these individuals are prone to prophesy what is likely to happen, and spend much time reading between the lines. But they tend to base their prognostications upon imaginings rather than objective facts. The prophet is the archetype, and as H. L. Mencken says: 'The prophesying business is like writing fugues; it is fatal to everyone save the man of absolute genius.'<sup>1</sup> That we still attend to seers is also explained by Mencken 'as due to the virulence of the national appetite for bogus revelation'.<sup>2</sup>

Few people make an unqualified success of being intuitively-introverted. Their estimable qualities of sagacity, caninness and insight often disconcert duller minds, and they are in consequence often disliked because they are misunderstood. Most of us can discover that it looks like rain, after it has poured; and it is annoying to meet people who can do much better than that.

The intuitive-introvert knows when to sell and when to buy; where to get the best value, though often at

<sup>1</sup> *Prejudices*, Ser. i

<sup>2</sup> *Book of Prefaces*, Ch. I, Section 2.

the worst price. He may know how to launch a prospectus, but not how to launch a political party. He is the ideal negotiator, but sometimes fails through over-subtlety. As a politician he may be sounder than his leader, but lacks the necessary rapport with others. As a churchman he makes an admirable bishop but a poor vicar. As a friend his advice is valuable, provided we don't take it, since to the perplexed, other people's opinions tend to take on a magical character.

The strength of this type of personality is that it foregoes so many of the illusory pursuits which occupy lesser intuitions. These people may not be exactly children of song, but they certainly are not creatures of impulse. For oddly enough, with quick perception often goes considerable restraint in action.

#### (8) *The Extrovert-intuitive type*

Here again we are on more substantial ground. This person relies on things as they are rather than on things as he feels they ought to be. His single-mindedness is to the main chance, and his advice is correspondingly sounder in many cases than that of the intuitive introvert.

These personalities are often opportunist, and make their way in life by a perennial hope, which unlike the hope of immortality is fervent and unfailing. They exercise their intuition on external facts, but are generally speculative and given to gambling. When faced with arguments against any favoured course of action, they often lapse into obstinacy. Shakespeare may have his 'mind's eye', Socrates his 'daemon', but these fellows know what they have seen in the saddling paddock, and cannot be moved by logic. Much of their life is based on wishful thinking.

## SUMMARY OF JUNG'S SCHEME

Let it be freely admitted that the foregoing are cartoons rather than portraits, and that anything so incorrigibly variable as human nature defies any firm classification. No one is solidly or consistently the same type of individual in all situations. A blood-thirsty poker-player has been known to be an indulgent father and true husband. The church sidesman who lays up treasure on earth is not unknown. The politician who says one thing and does the same thing exists principally in autobiographies.

All that has been suggested is that people do tend toward characteristic behaviour. Insofar as human conduct is at all predictable, all that we can say of ourselves is that being what we are, we will probably do this, or that, in any given situation. But personality has an infinite capacity for surprising even itself. Lancelot Hogben confesses without confusion that he avoids walking under ladders, spilling salt, or looking at the new moon through the windscreen of his car. T. S. Eliot is not only one of our foremost poets; he is also a director of one of London's greatest publishing houses, and is reported to work seriously at it. John Dunne is a great deal more than an abstract philosopher at home in the fourth dimension. He was among the first English pioneers of aviation, and invented the tail-less Dunne aerofoil, besides designing and building the first British military aircraft.

Even hangmen have been observably full of sweetness and light.

Yet to argue the difficulties is not to disprove the use of classification in personality study. The importance of temperament to success in life is incontestable. Not only are we often unaware of the effect our

temperament has upon others; we are sometimes constitutionally unable to judge their temperament fairly and reasonably. Was it not the Countess of Oxford who, when asked what she thought of somebody, replied that she disliked him too much to venture an opinion.

It is the contention of some industrial psychologists that this bias in judgement of ourselves and of others pre-empts self-analysis of any value. Dr. May Smith, for instance, holds that unlike intelligence or practical skill, temperament cannot be estimated except by personal interview with a trained and objective observer.<sup>1</sup> The pitfalls of introspection have been acknowledged but there are some things—important things, too—which only the man himself knows. Certainly no interviewer, however skilled, will find them out. What man will acknowledge so profoundly significant a factor as a secret vice? Psycho-analysis may prevail against his conspiracy of silence, but no personnel officer can ferret it out, unless there are obvious physical symptoms to be noted.

#### KRETSCHMER'S *PHYSIQUE AND CHARACTER*

In 1925, Kretschmer's treatment of body chemistry as a basis for temperamental differences imported a new approach to the study of personality.

His system may be set out diagrammatically to avoid the complexity of technicalities with which it is studded. He concluded that there is a definite relation between physical and temperamental characteristics, though he makes it clear that in the majority of people, temperament and physique are a blend rather than a fixed category of the types he describes.

It will be seen then that Kretschmer has two basic

<sup>1</sup> *An Introduction to Industrial Psychology*, p. 154.

types as against Jung's eight, and his system is founded upon a theory that there is a definite correlation between a man's physique and his temperament. His findings take shape something as follows:

#### BODILY CHARACTERISTICS

<i>The 'asthenic' type</i>	<i>The 'athletic' type</i>	<i>The 'pyknic' type</i>
lean and of average height, but with narrow shoulders, flat chest and poor muscular development.	well-developed and above average height and strength. This group is more a sub-variety of the asthenic than a distinct type.	medium or short in height, with rounded figure, thick limbs and prominent abdomen.

#### CORRESPONDING TEMPERAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

<i>The 'schizothymic' type</i> (corresponding with both the 'asthenic' and the 'athletic' physiques) unsociable, distant and reserved; capable of deep emotion, but outwardly cold and unresponsive.	<i>The 'cyclothymic' type</i> (corresponding with the 'pyknic' physique) tends to be sociable and genial, but is apt to oscillate between moods of exaltation and depression.
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There are likenesses between Kretschmer's 'asthenic' physique and 'schizothymic' temperament, and Jung's introverts. Similarly, Kretschmer's 'pyknic' physique and 'cyclothymic' temperament is akin to Jung's 'extrovert'.

But it must generally be clear that Kretschmer's two groups are extreme types, the opposite ends of a scale of temperamental differences, the middle ground of which is occupied by the normal, balanced people who appear throughout Jung's more detailed system. Tending toward either end come those who manifest a definite trend toward an extreme personality. That Kretschmer's two types are in fact extremes is evident

when we note that the outer ends of his scale are tethered to two types of insanity. The 'schizophrenic' insanity is the 'schizothymic' temperament taken to its illogical limits; and the 'manic-depressive' insanity is the extreme 'cyclothymic' temperament. In 'schizophrenia' the patient lives in a fantastic dream-world of his own, and in 'manic-depression' the unbalanced sufferer alternates between violent extremes of ecstasy and suicidal gloom. With these aberrations we are here no more concerned than with the Freudian abnormalities.

Examples of Kretschmer's types will readily occur to the reader. Anthony Eden represents the 'athletic-schizothymic' personality; the late Neville Chamberlain the 'asthenic-schizothymic' personality; and Winston Churchill the 'pyknic-cyclothymic' personality. If these examples be thought impertinent, a safer perspective may be found in Mr. Pickwick as the round-fat-jolly-loquacious type (the pyknic-cyclothyme); Mr. Jaggars as the mortician-like, seldom-smiling, umbrella-carrying, remote-and-distant type (the asthenic schizothyme); and Mr. Nicholas Nickleby as the gallant-much-admired type (the athletic-schizothyme). Thespians will perhaps prefer the examples of Falstaff and Cassius.

#### SPRANGER'S TYPES OF MEN

Published in 1928, Spranger's work attempted a classification of temperament according to a man's evaluative attitudes. He elaborated six types of people, grouped according to the basic outlook on life.

##### (1) *The Theoretical or Intellectual Attitude*

This person is preoccupied with observation, reason, and the discovery of truth. Those who tend to



subordinate everything to the 'scientific attitude' are the antithesis of the poet and mystic, who find only tyranny in the rigidity and dogma of physical science. Plato represents the intellectual attitude in banishing poetry from his ideal philosophic state as being a pose, a fraud and a pretence of knowledge, charging that poets accept opinions as certainties without testing their veracity.

Einstein has defended the scientist and mathematician by pointing out that if we ask why applied science which saves work and makes life easier brings us so little happiness, the simple answer is that we have not yet learned to make sensible use of it. Nor will he concede that the rhapsodical flights of poesy and mystical thaumaturgy will measurably improve the human situation.

It is the characteristic fault of the intellectual to outrun the understanding—and therefore the support—of his more pedestrian fellows: just as it is his fate to find his discoveries diverted by them to perverted ends.

But he who is temperamentally committed to this intellectual approach to everything is not lightly persuaded. These are the world's great builders, planners and executives.

## (2) *The Economic attitude*

This temperament places the emphasis upon utility as against other valuations. Hard-headed and practical, this individual deems anything to be valuable insofar as it bears directly upon his material problems. He is ambitious, driving and calculating. He judges men by their earning capacity; a home by its size and gadgetry; a wife by her ability to cope with the functions of mistress, mother, maker-and-baker, social asset

and miracle of domestic economy; friends by their usefulness; and everything indeed as grist for his mill.

That is admittedly a harsh caricature, but is set down thus to indicate where the economic attitude can take a man who pursues it too far. He who counts every item can look to the miser for his horoscope.

Taking this type of temperament at its more normal levels, we can discern it in the politician who subordinates programmes to practicabilities and who refuses to think 'well it's not my money I'm spending anyway'. No man should be running his country's business without a fair modicum of the economic attitude in his make-up. In the home, this sort of person will have no truck with the hire-purchase seduction. In business he does not bankrupt for want of a balance sheet. In a church he sees that the parson is paid as well as prayed for.

McDougall found that there were still certain peoples like the Punans of Borneo who support themselves by hunting, who build no homes, and who have no possessions beyond what they carry with them on their wanderings. From which it will be seen how much there is to be said for a proportionate amount of the economic temperament.

### (3) *The Æsthetic attitude*

Here the stress is on the life of imagination. For some types of temperament, the main interest lies in beauty, harmony, form and proportion. But they tend to be idealistic and impractical. The æsthetic aim is important, as modern education is coming increasingly to realize. Self-fulfilment and self-realization are the principal meaning of life. The æsthetic type feels that mere usefulness has little or no bearing upon life's values.

Audubon may be beaten as a nine-year-old for wasting his time in drawing birds instead of studying Latin, or whatever it was that his irate father preferred. But so intense can this type be that we are not surprised to find him escaping to America, there to confound his father—and France—by the ornithological genius he and its educational system sought to proscribe.<sup>1</sup>

Such are the rebels against a mechanical age whose values repudiate the things of the spirit.

Debussy and the Symbolist poets and Impressionist painters were temperamentally men of the æsthetic attitude. They were much more than arty innovators. Rightly understood, they are seen as leaders of a revolt against the mechanical and commercial domination of art. They were willing to forfeit prizes and commissions and professional approval in their determination to reassert the æsthetic attitude, which for them at least lay in new forms and expression.

Unfortunately, for every man of genius there are ten thousand peculiarists. In a commercialized society the æsthetic temperament can achieve expression only in leisure-interests. Few can hope to live by their art. Since only the brilliant few can make their living by æsthetic abilities, this temperament tends toward impracticalities.

Those who feel themselves impelled to the dilettante attitude toward life are early forced to consider the advantage of regular meals.

#### (4) *The Social attitude*

Spranger's types, it must be borne in mind, are types of evaluative attitudes. They are an interpretation of man according to the things he deems desirable.

<sup>1</sup> *Ornithological Biography*, by J. J. Audubon.

Those who manifest what he calls the social attitude find the higher satisfactions in serving their fellow-men. Our modern scepticism may find it difficult to believe that such men exist; which is partly the reason why so few do in fact come forward to serve the common weal.

The communist communities of the various historic Utopias represent the social attitude in ideal. Their emphasis is upon self-subordination instead of self-realization.

People have been devising Utopias for a long time. They are at it again in our own time, a brave gesture indeed in the wake of total war. The weakness of elevating this attitude into a way of life is that all too often, Utopias are framed by the wrong sort of people. Such schemes have, in fact, been worked up by bookish philosophers with private incomes, who were sufficiently eccentric to despise women and the natural appetites. They have been conceived by economists who mistake the part for the whole; by fanatics lacking humour; by cynics who conceive their imaginary worlds as a vehicle for their satire on the real one; and by escapists who flee the facts.

Too many in whom the social attitude is paramount seem to desire a perfect society, which we may suspect to be intolerably boring. A good number of these Utopias provide everything but gaiety, and those who desire ardently to reform the world are commended to consider Wells's argument that often we cannot see Utopia because we happen to be sitting in it. Wells was the last man to regard this as the best of all worlds, so we may accept his comment more as a caution to those who have what Dr. Kimball Young calls the 'Green Pastures' complex.

Like almost everything else in human personality, the social attitude should be indulged only in moderation.

(5) *The Political attitude*

With this type of temperament there is a basic urge to authority. It will not necessarily take the broadest field of politics. It may find its expression in business, or the church, or in any other form of institutionalism.

The type ranges from the petty trade-union official up to the powerful industrial leader; from the officious foreman up to the tycoon who holds the power of hiring and firing thousands; it may range from the boot-licking junior officer right up to generals whose epaulettes are still itchy.

Modern democratic thought finds it difficult to discover many redeeming features in this type of temperament. A man in whom this hunger to manipulate his fellow-men is a dominating interest, is in urgent need of an alienist. We appear to have given Fascist ideology at least a temporary check. But there will always be those for whom authority and power are the supreme satisfactions.

Dickens laid bare the technique of demagogues when he put the political attitude in the stocks:

'It is always best on these occasions to do what the mob do.'

'But suppose there are two mobs?' suggested Mr. Snodgrass.

'Shout with the largest,' replied Mr. Pickwick.

Of course we must have politicians. And we shall not lack those sincerely actuated by the social attitudes rather than the urge to power. This temperament at its legitimate levels will be content with honourable political ambition. It would be a salutary discipline

if every aspirant for high public office had to confess his real ambition; first to himself, and then to his constituents. To justify the political attitude it is necessary to survive some such test.

(6) *The Religious attitude*

According to Spranger, this type of temperament is preponderantly concerned with life's ultimate and eternal meaning. To this end he must of necessity go beyond knowledge to rest upon faith and belief. Comment here would be an intrusion into matters beyond our scope.

The average individual will discover in himself something of all these attitudes, covering as they do most of our mental activities. The shortest route to understanding our fellows is to know which interests are dominant in their make-up. Spranger has a test entitled the 'Study of Values', which is calculated to determine in an individual the relative prominence of these basic interests. Sufficient has been said to indicate the basis of yet another classification of temperament.

RUDOLPH STEINER

Among the more significant contributions to modern educational theory is that of Steiner, whose ideas are given brief mention because they throw a new light upon the making of personality. In them there recurs like a ground bass, the four bodily humours of ancient Greek physiology, but set to very modern harmony.

Steiner enters a special plea for the revision of our approach to personality in the child. Our earliest spiritual, mental and physical development are given new alignment in his work. He sees the life processes, up to the age of seven, as concentrated on building up

the head and the nerve centres. During the second seven years it is the chest system, the breathing and the circulation of the blood to which nature applies herself. From the age of fourteen, the life forces are focused on the bodily metabolism.

Upon the soundness of Steiner's biological premisses I am not qualified to speak, but one cannot but be attracted by his treatment of the growth and development of the personality. Though it is as yet unformed during the first two septenaries, its principal characteristics are being determined, says Steiner; and it is throughout the third and fourth periods, from the 'teen years to the early twenties that personality begins to be expressed. The implication of all this is stated in his own words: 'In the first seven years, moralizing and appeals are useless. Whatever goes on in the surroundings of the child will be imitated. The child is first, wholly sense organ. There is unity of body, soul and spirit. The child functions in all faculties at every stimulation. The adult person transplants sense experiences first into thought and then transfers them into knowledge. The child acts instantly.'

After the age of seven, he continues, the child begins to 'dream' and to see life as a sequence of pictures. Therefore its imagination is paramount. Fairy tales, pictures, images and so on are intensely real for its mental life, since the biological emphasis has shifted from its brain development to the breathing and circulatory systems. In consequence it responds to everything presented to it in rhythm or rhyme. Music, painting, modelling, and poetry are eagerly pursued in these years.

It is here that Steiner demonstrates a curious correlation between the child's growing character and the manner of his chosen self-expression. At this point

parents can gain an insight into the child's temperament and personality. He says: 'The sanguine child's painting is characterized by the repetition with rhythmic modifications of some particular motive. Choleric children express their temperament happily and healthily if they are allowed to play about for a time with vermillion and bright yellow. Melancholic children grow more cheerful if they are allowed to express their more sober natures with pale lilac and rather deeper blue.'

It is to be noted that Steiner came to these conclusions empirically, rather than by arbitrarily adopting Galen's system of humoral classification. He offers our colour preference as yet another clue to temperament. Steiner's is an interesting theory of personality in the making.

#### SHELDON'S *VARIETIES OF TEMPERAMENT*

This latest scientific treatise turns out to be so like that of Kretschmer in the essentials as to be regarded merely as a more detailed extension of the formalized correlation between physique and temperament.

Sheldon has gathered the research of some fifteen years into a classification based upon many thousands of standardized measurements. Taking five bodily areas he built up a seven-point scale of physical proportion for each. By certain mathematical procedures he arrives at a three-digit formula for each individual. This formula expresses the relative proportions of each bodily characteristic and its accompanying temperament. The varieties of physique he names 'endomorph', 'mesomorph' and 'ectomorph'. The extreme endomorph corresponds nearly enough with Kretschmer's pyknic type, the short-fat-embonpoint fellow. The predominantly mesomorph corresponds



with Kretschmer's athletic type; and the advanced ectomorph with his asthenic, the tall-thin-herring-gutted type. This is the thesis of the first volume.<sup>1</sup>

When Sheldon comes to classify the corresponding temperamental types he names them, in the relative order of the foregoing 'morphys', respectively, 'viscerotonia', 'somatotonia' and 'cerebrotonia'.<sup>2</sup>

Reduced to diagrammatic form, the parallel with the scheme of Kretschmer is evident.

#### BODILY CHARACTERISTICS

<i>The 'ectomorph'</i> type	<i>The 'mesomorph'</i> type	<i>The 'endomorph'</i> type
linear physique, stringy muscles, light-weight and unmuscular.	strong-boned, with powerful muscles, boxers, footballers, and military leaders tend toward this group.	short, comfortable roundness, becoming in middle life big-bellied.

#### CORRESPONDING TEMPERAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

<i>The 'cerebrotonic'</i>	<i>The 'somatonic'</i>	<i>The 'viscerotonic'</i>
over-alert, over-introspective, restrained and distant in character.	assertive, physically active, given to quick reaction and vigorous habit.	slow, relaxed, fond of food and comfort, amiable and social in character.

#### THE THREE TEMPERAMENTS

*The cerebrotonic temperament* is tense and restrained. It is this type, says Sheldon, who suffer from nervous indigestion, who get stage-fright, and feel nauseated with mere shyness. In its extremer forms this temperament has no love for company, hates to make itself conspicuous, tends to be moody, to fidget among strangers, and to seem almost furtive. These persons

<sup>1</sup> *Varieties of Human Physique.*

<sup>2</sup> *Varieties of Temperament.*

have an habitually inhibited and restrained manner so that they are sometimes deemed cold and heartless. They love quiet, are extremely sensitive to pain, sleep poorly, suffer from chronic fatigue, and are poor at adapting themselves to an active routine such as the military life. Alcohol merely depresses this type, or makes them thoroughly ill. Sheldon's diagnosis suggests that he is describing the Cassius type; Galen's 'melancholic', Jung's 'introvert', Kretschmer's 'schizothyme' and Spranger's 'theoretical' type.

*The somatotonic temperament* is expressed by love of action, physical adventure and competitive sports. When in trouble, this type of individual seeks relief in physical action. Procrastination is not his failing, for he cannot abide inaction of any kind. Neither excessively relaxed and comfort-loving like the fat man, nor inhibited and sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought like the cerebrotonic undertaker-type, this person is the pronounced extrovert; direct and friendly in the company of others. He loves to dominate and is congenitally insensitive to other people's feelings. He has none of Mr. Pickwick's amiability, and none of Cassius's mental firmness.

*The viscerotonic temperament* is conspicuously relaxed in posture and movement, heavy and slow in reaction, profound at least in sleep, love of physical comfort and partiality to food. He likes to eat in company, is fond of polite ceremony, is indiscriminately amiable, and has a marked dependence on the approval and admiration of other people. This temperament does not stifle its emotion, but expresses it as it arises, so that nobody is ever in doubt as to his feelings. This is Falstaff to a tee. Alcohol increases his amiability, in contradistinction to the heightened aggressiveness of the somatotonic temperament, the athletic individual.

## SOME CONCLUSIONS

Sheldon is satisfied that he has proven a close relationship as between his types of physique and his types of temperament. So was Kretschmer. But Sheldon goes on to point out that three men who are temperamentally alike may choose altogether different ways of expressing their personalities.

For example, given the same degree of somatotonia (the athletic type of Kretschmer), one man may become a suavely-efficient business executive. The second may become a professional soldier of the explosive, ruthless variety; and the third may turn into a tough gangster. Each will be in his own way an aggressive, power-loving, daring, energetic, extroverted and insensitive individual. And, says Sheldon, no amount of training, no effort of the will, can serve to transform these three men into relaxed and indiscriminately amiable viscerotonics, or into hyper-attentional, introverted cerebrotonics. Similarly, many who fall within his other groupings will choose individual ways of expressing their personalities.

It is notable that none of these pretentious systematizers have said it all as succinctly as A. P. Herbert:

‘So many citizens I see,  
A sort of poodle seem to be  
Or else a sort of pug.’

## YOUR SELF-ANALYSIS

Knowledge that we fall into one or other of these groups can have considerable consequence in planning a career, correcting a wrong employment, developing a balanced personality, and finding the way to success in life as a whole.

The efficient running of any business, and the achievement of any individual in it, depend upon a right vocational adjustment. To put the right men in the proper places requires a knowledge of their temperamental characteristics. If an extrovert tries to work in an introvert's sphere, or vice versa, the outcome can only be a compromise and a limitation both to the man and the job. These two personality types do not think, or feel or act alike, and for certain jobs it is necessary to think and feel and act in specific ways. It is valuable and useful to know why we are 'cut out' to do some jobs rather than others.

But vocational selection is only part of the function of temperament analysis. A man's domestic happiness often eludes him because the partnership is unsuitable and unequal. If a man has to find the right job, he has also to find the right wife. It may be that any talk of rationality in the emotional processes is just plain foolishness. Anatole France says that intelligent women always marry fools, while Shaw says that intelligent men never marry at all. But setting aside frivolous comment, the fact remains that there is only one cause of divorce, however it may be stated in the court proceedings—and that is incompatibility. And compatibility is purely a matter of matching temperaments.

One other desideratum remains—good health. This too can be largely a matter of understanding one's physical and temperamental constitution. The glandular secretions which so powerfully affect our organism themselves change with the passing years, calling for periodic adjustment of our way of life. We start the business of life with an inherited equipment. We complete it with a temperament of our own. If we wish, we may be like that pawky fellow who wrapped

epileptic of 'jive' is the complete extrovert; the Indian fakir sitting cross-legged and gazing for years in imbecile ecstasy at his own nose is the complete introvert.

There is the gamut. Somewhere in between lies the orbit of your individuality.

#### THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

At this point the reader may recapitulate the results of the Questionnaire for this chapter. Your answers may be compared with the following Rating-key.

#### SECTION I

'A' scores denote extroverted traits, and since the questions have been framed about the mental functions of Thinking and Feeling, your score will indicate the degree to which your rational life is organized and controlled. A score of six or more 'A's' would suggest a marked tendency toward an extrovert-thinking and extrovert-feeling temperament. Four to six 'A's' or 'B's' would indicate an average mixed-disposition, without undue bias toward either extroverted or introverted thought and emotion. On the other hand, six or more 'B's' reveal a marked tendency toward introverted traits.

It cannot be too heavily underlined that there are no comparative values as between extroversion and introversion. Each temperament has its qualities and its defects, but one cannot be held to be 'better' or 'more desirable' than another. You may for your own reasons desire to cultivate certain attitudes complementary to your own temperament, or to develop further those characteristics which you perceive to be an existing strength in your personality. It may be advisable to correct certain tendencies which

you can discern in your temperament. These are the anticipated reactions to any study of the Self. But it will hardly be necessary to conclude that you must now sedulously cultivate a temperament which is opposite to that which you possess.

The guiding principle offered in Section I is that of Jung's major division into introverted or extroverted characteristics. The other systems of classification may be read for what they may have to contribute to your further development and self-understanding. But finding yourself on one or other side of this main water-shed, common sense directs that you make the best possible use of that personality to which it has pleased God, your glands, and your environment to commit you.

## SECTION II

'A' answers here indicate introverted habits of thought and feeling. Thus a score of six or seven 'A's' is an index of marked introvert-thinking and introvert-emotional personality. Four to six 'A's' or 'B's' reflect again a dispositional mixture, and six or more 'B's' suggest a definite disposition toward extroversion in thought and emotion.

Parts I and II of the Questionnaire should give you a conspectus of your basic temperamental characteristics in the more rational processes of your personality.

## SECTION III

In the third part of the Questionnaire an attempt is made to chart your temperament in respect to the irrational processes of sensation and intuition.

Twelve questions, six of which cover the former and six the latter process, are to be answered in the affirmative or the negative. Again the intention is to

diagnose the extent of extroversion or introversion in your temperament under these two aspects of consciousness.

A 'Yes' answer to questions 1, 2 and 5 would indicate a tendency toward introverted-sensation, and a 'Yes' to questions 3, 4 and 6 suggests a corresponding disposition toward extroverted-sensation in your personality.

In the second set of six questions, an affirmative answer to questions 7, 8 and 10 classify you as intuitively introverted; while affirmative answers to questions 9, 11 and 12 type you as an intuitively-extroverted personality.

Reference to the relevant section of the chapter will explain the significance of such a classification as you have uncovered. All that this chapter may have shown is that your temperament is either (1) a marked introvert; (2) a mixed disposition, or (3) a definite extrovert.

You may quite reasonably conclude that there is insufficient testing in any questionnaire to justify a final conclusion. But by achieving the necessary detachment of mind, and having resisted the temptation to represent yourself as an Admirable Crichton, your score will be at least interesting.

'Life has its heroes and its villains, its soubrettes and its ingenues, and all roles may be acted well.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Modern Temper*, J. W. Krutch.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER III

Indicate the statement which most nearly expresses your viewpoint: (a) or (b) or (c).

#### I

- (a) *I do not envy public figures: they are too dependent upon public opinion. I don't care for that sort of thing.* .....
- (b) *If there is anything of a public nature going on I like taking part, and feel it my duty to do so.* .....
- (c) *I'm too self-conscious to enter into social or public activities.* .....

#### II

- (a) *Time often hangs heavily for me, especially if I am alone.* .....
- (b) *My duties and interests keep me reasonably busy and contented.* .....
- (c) *There is never sufficient time for the things I want to do; most of my cherished plans are in cold-storage for the future.* .....

#### III

- (a) *I find that in life it's necessary to get on with it and not concern oneself with the other fellow's viewpoint.* .....



- (b) *My method is rather to show that my way would be the best and most satisfactory plan; and it usually does turn out to be.* .....
- (c) *I prefer persuasiveness and personal appeal. That works best for me.* .....

## IV

- (a) *I'm sorry to see young girls spoil their femininity by indiscriminate smoking and drinking. To me it's a matter of æsthetic values rather than moral ones. I just don't care for it personally.* .....
- (b) *If young girls want to smoke and drink, well—what about it? Narrow-mindedness won't do any good. Canute got exactly nowhere.* .....
- (c) *I suppose we should blame the times rather than the individual. No one is forced to do these things. If they choose to do so it's their own affair.* .....

## V

- (a) *I make friends slowly, and while I may not have a great many, once they are made I cherish them.* .....
- (b) *I always have a few close friends of both sexes, but they keep changing somewhat from time to time.* .....
- (c) *I know lots of people who interest me and are friends in the broader sense. But I seldom become intimately associated with any of them. I prefer to live that way.* .....

## VI

- (a) *I think marriage should be built on mutual respect and admiration. Once married there*

*is no place for interest in another man or woman. I can think of very few situations for which divorce is a proper solution.* .....

(b) *That's a dull recipe. Romantic love is our natural right and the only basis for a happy marriage. A woman craves for romance as much as a man, and both are entitled to get it, even if it means divorce.* .....

(c) *I'll go further than that. Romantic love alone can survive the test of marriage. Mutual respect is totally inadequate, for marriage is basically a sex relationship. Divorce is a proper means of achieving a satisfactory sex-life.* .....

## VII

(a) *If I were facing financial failure, I'd immediately reduce my state of living, budget carefully, and try to re-establish myself without anyone knowing of my problems.* .....

(b) *I would think it most important to maintain appearances and would avoid any such retrenchment. By lowering my scale of living I should only prejudice my chances of recovery. I've good friends from whom I could borrow to tide me over.* .....

(c) *I'd take a different line altogether. My experience would suggest the wisdom of buying a new outfit that made me feel and look like prosperity itself. I believe that I could sell myself and my abilities by a bold front. My luck would change. It always does.* .....

## VIII

- (a) *My preference in books, films and plays is the dramatic, biographical, historical and psychological type.* .....
- (b) *I usually choose the romantic type, with the pleasant plot and an entertaining ending.* .....
- (c) *My choice are those full of life with a capital L, and with plenty of action and excitement.* .....

## IX

- (a) *I'm not prone to think much about dignity and convention, but I do follow the rules in matters of propriety. It is distasteful to me to be 'different' or 'peculiar' among others.* .....
- (b) *There are no rules that can't be broken if a matter is sufficiently challenging—especially the conventions and customs.* .....
- (c) *My world is built on substantiality, good form and the accepted custom. I believe in living socially in a dignified and respectable manner.* .....

## X

- (a) *It embarrasses me to be quoted, referred to as an authority, regarded as an example, or sought as a counsellor. Advice is the cheapest of all commodities.* .....
- (b) *I consider such an attitude stupid. Why should I not express myself and my views in these ways?* .....
- (c) *I suppose these things are expected of us sometimes, and by our close friends. He who counsels, aids.* .....

### CHAPTER III

## THE MATURING PERSONALITY

‘Good Lord, what is man? for as simple as he looks,  
Do but try to develop his hooks and his crooks!  
With his depths and his shallows, his good and his evil  
All in all he’s a problem must puzzle the devil.’

BURNS

ARRESTED development—Peter-panism—is reflected in the personality under many guises. The middle-aged savant who delights in model trains and signalling systems is entitled to his harmless juvenilia, but the individual who inflicts practical jokes is an unmitigated nuisance.

The mature personality is not so readily classified. As Emerson has it: ‘Nature never rhymes her children, nor makes two men alike.’<sup>1</sup> There is no one ideal type of personality—there are many. Homiletics about personality are therefore even more singularly inappropriate than homilies on the good life. If there be a pantheon of personalities, at least one pedestal must be empty and inscribed ‘To the Unknown Ideal’. Even holding a mirror up to nature is ineffectual for the standards of Papua or Patagonia will hardly obtain in Parramatta or Poughkeepsie.

We have all experienced the bewildering shifts and changes which find our personality so often inadequate to circumstance. A sense of humour, so highly and

<sup>1</sup> *Essays, Second Series*, “Character.”

understandingly valued in undergraduate circles, could only create embarrassment among morticians. A dauntless self-assurance, most unseemly in a private secretary, is of paramount importance to the politician he serves. What is a welcome friendliness behind a bar is an impertinence behind a counter. That which is prudence in a captain would be but pusillanimity in a general. The virtues of our friends are vices in our competitors. These are but a few of the complexities which conspire against any attempt to portray the mature personality.

We are dowered with so versatile a thing as personality in order that we may be appropriately different on various occasions. No exemplar can match every *milieu* nor be presented for universal emulation. An unabashed and persistent righteousness may enjoy canonical approval, but as H. H. Munro reminded us, it is a not unmixed blessing: 'She took to telling the truth on all occasions; she said she was forty-two and five months. It may have been pleasing to the angels, but her elder sister was not gratified.'<sup>1</sup>

Absolute truth and absolute honesty are supremacies confined to the followers of the redoubtable Buchman. As the Eighth Duke of Argyll records in his *Autobiography*, forthright souls like Lord Melbourne must set their course in this imperfect world by more attainable aids to navigation. He is reported to have set his back to the door of the Cabinet room and said: 'I don't care what damned lie we must tell; but not a man shall leave till we have agreed to tell the same damned lie.' It is not true that there is no agreement in politics. As to the truth of the incident, everyone knows that Dukes have no need to lie.

Even the virtue of candour can be overplayed.

<sup>1</sup> *Reginald*.

Poor old Blücher might be eclipsed at Waterloo; he can even pass his last days in insanity, believing himself to be *enceinte* to a Frenchman—crowning disgrace for a good German. But he is securely among the immortals for that shocking *bon mot* on the City of London, when his enthusiasm betrayed him into saying: 'My God! What a city to sack!' Consequences discourage invincible candour.

So, in search of the mature personality, we might compass the whole catena of good qualities only to encounter this universal statute of limitations. Where, then, is to be found some convenient gold standard to which the fluctuations of personality in time and place and person may be referred?

Professor G. W. Allport proposes the touchstone in what he calls 'insight'.<sup>1</sup> This single saving grace is supposed to be an inerrant guide to the appropriate expression of personality. Given insight, a man will not obtrude the self-submissive sentiment when the self-assertive is called for; he will not be self-derogatory when his services are needed: he will not be ineffectual when he should be forceful, frank when he should be tactful, emotional when he ought to be rational, kind where he should be candid, tolerant where he should be indignant.

But all the law and the prophets were never yet contained in a single word. Few modern psychologists, in even wider compass, have had the hardihood to essay a description of the mature personality. Hence it is more prudent to write of the 'maturing' personality, finding safety in the gerund. Not even a competent stockbroker can furnish a definite list of investments that should meet the requirements of all clients at all times. For that one must apply to a bucket-shop.

<sup>1</sup> *A Systematic Questionnaire for the Study of Personality.*

## INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

The central position here taken is that of Adler, perhaps the truest and most believable of all the analysts, because his method is founded upon a view of the individual as a whole in himself, and an indivisible unit of human society. As a convinced socialist, Adler saw the individual not as a separate phenomenon, but as an integral part of his society.

Accordingly, the aim of his personal analysis is to discover the individual's particular 'style of life', his pattern for living; and having found it, to introduce him progressively to one of wider service to the community. On this view the basis of personality reposes in an equilibrium between the man and his society, between the two fundamental instincts of self-assertion and self-submission.

Many academics have long since surrendered any such 'simplification' and have waded boldly into a sea of troubles. A little Freud is a most dangerous thing, for few who tipple his heady mixture can match his penetration of mind. Few manage to resist the intoxication of the psycho-analytic system. Of all the analysts Adler remains a surer guide to such practical conclusions as we seek.

Can we recognize a mature personality as we do a mature body? I believe so, and by the same set of standards; size, strength, and symmetry; in short—by its development.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF

'The use of self-control is like the use of brakes on a train. It is useful when you find yourself going in the wrong direction, but merely harmful when the direction is right.'

BERTRAND RUSSELL

One would not imagine that the modern world needs to be exhorted to be aggressive and assertive. Yet there is point in Russell's statement, for once a man has found himself and applied himself to legitimate ends, a thorough-going enthusiasm is the *sine qua non* of success. That is why youth is such a golden age.

The maturing personality has a wide variety of self-governing interests. With their aid a man can both express and subordinate himself—in work, leisure, reflection and in loyalty to others. He will be neither self-centred nor self-pitying, for both are drags upon his progression. He will be happiest when his interests are focused proportionately upon himself and his society. He will have learned that the two are neither mutually exclusive nor irreconcilable. He knows that the good of either is the good of both.

Therefore the Extension of the Self is the first requisite: it must embrace community.

The second factor, complementary to the first, is Self-Objectification. Professor Pear has described it thus: ' . . . that peculiar detachment attained by the mature person when he can survey his pretensions in relation to his actual abilities, his present aims in comparison with possible future goals, his own equipment in comparison with that of his associates, and his estimation of himself in relation to the opinion others hold of him.'<sup>1</sup> By 'personality' then, we might mean the effect upon others of a living being's appearance, sounds, behaviour, and influence. And in pursuing certain standards for the maturing personality we shall do well to have regard to the evaluation Pear predicates—self-objectification.

By these two processes, self-extension (living reciprocally within a community) and self-objectification

<sup>1</sup> *The Modern Study of Personality.*



(judging oneself comparatively with others in that community) a man may strike a balance in his personality. It remains now to analyse those positive qualities of the developing Self which have social approval and which invite attainment. In the next chapter we shall reverse the picture, weighing the corresponding defects of character which indicate a lack of development and maturity.

#### INTROCEPTION

The process by which a man becomes part of his community, and is gradually integrated with his fellows, has been called by William Stern 'introception'. Thereby, the interests and values of other people, which at first seemed either indifferent or inimical to the individual, come to be seen as interests and values, and are incorporated into his 'style of life'. From an individualist pursuing his own ends by the subordination of everything and everybody else, the man has become a member of his society, sharing its means and its ends. This equilibrium as between self-assertion and self-subordination is the mark of the journeyman as against the entered apprentice to life.

Introception in the grand manner is apparent in the development of Cecil Rhodes the diamond-mine prospector into Rhodes the benefactor who spent three million pounds of his fortune to found the State which bears his name, and the remainder to endow Oriel College and the Rhodes Scholarships. It is not mere philanthropy which is here involved. It is the process of a man losing himself in a greater cause. Rhodes went to Africa as one of thousands to wrest from the country and from competitors such fortune as he might. Nor did he wait till his money was no longer of any meaning to him before making the

change into something more useful than a financier. He had come to love the country, to envision its future, so that presently he no longer worked and planned for himself alone. Long before he gave away his fortune he had given away himself. His final philanthropy was but the last part of a 'way of life' which demonstrates this process of introception. There are benefactors who merely give away what they can no longer use. Rhodes matured from a speculator into a statesman. That he might have been an individualist to the end is shown by the life and fate of his great rival, Barnato.

T. E. Lawrence exemplifies the extension of the acutely introspective personality into the man of affairs—and in contrariety to his every instinctive desire. His strange story answers the question: 'Can the self-conscious man be saved by introspection?'

Self-consciousness is in fact the only means of growth into maturity. But the exactions of self-analysis and self-realization are so frightening to the sensitive spirit that few achieve it. Even Lawrence succumbed to his temperament at the last. The continuous suppression of the Self by its Identity—as Blake's terminology has it—is enervating to a degree. In Lawrence's own phrase: 'Happiness comes by absorption.'

This is precisely the process of introception.

Lenin could say, in his fierce struggle for self-realization: 'Go hungry, work illegally, and be anonymous.' Here the three fundamental needs of individuality are negated—bodily appetites, social acceptance and personalized achievement. For some bleak spirits, such immolation of the Self is the only way to a synthesis of feeling and reason, act and thought. The average individual will be content with something a good deal less heroic.

Lesser illustrations of the process of introception may be found in common experience. Every successful marriage is an example. In fact, there are few more salutary extensions of the Self than falling in love; and once a man is married he is assured of the chief obligation toward selflessness. In courtship we put up a bold front of the excellences and in marriage we are committed to sustain them. Which is doubtless why Ambrose Bierce was impelled to define marriage as 'a community consisting of a master, a mistress, and two slaves, making in all, two'.<sup>1</sup> By this steady process of introception, man as a community of one, becomes two, and then, of necessity, many. The bachelor becomes the bridegroom, and the bridegroom becomes the burgher. Our achievements are directly valuable and adequate insofar as they come by introception.

'Every man who is high up loves to think he has done it all himself, and the wife smiles and lets it go at that.'<sup>2</sup>

#### A COMPOSITE PICTURE

Without any attempt at order, it may be fairly assumed that the desirable qualities of personality and character are (1) enlightened self-assertiveness; (2) interest in others; (3) wisdom and judgement; (4) tolerance and balance; (5) gentleness and friendliness; (6) generosity and loyalty; (7) prudence; (8) taste and discrimination; (9) candour and moral courage; and (10) modesty.

The point has been made that all of these are virtues only in proportion and proper place, so that after we have defined and described them, it will still and

<sup>1</sup> *Devil's Dictionary*, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> *What Every Woman Knows*, Act IV, Barrie.

always remain for each individual to apply them according to his own insight and perception. Then, too, it must be borne in mind that for every such quality that is admirable, there is a corresponding and opposite characteristic which is undesirable. Every moral sentiment tends to be bi-polar. If we have agreed to value the personality-trait of generosity, we have also covenanted to despise meanness. The same will be true of such opposites as gentleness and harshness, temperance and greed, modesty and conceit, candour and deceitfulness, sympathy and coldness, steadfastness and inconstancy. Because it is often only from the negative sentiment that we can envisage a positive, these contraries must be kept in view.

They tend to make the personality censorious, irascible, and unsympathetic. These characteristics we shall review in due course; false modesty, monomania, self-importance, dogmatism, officiousness, censoriousness, immoderation, hyper-sensitivity, insincerity and vanity.

It may well be asked: 'Can psychology enter this sphere of ethical values to any advantage? In so hotly-contested a field as the right and the good, how runs the writ of psychological analysis?'

It is an old criticism that psychology offers diagnosis without cure. Freud's psycho-analysis did much to nullify this objection. And Adler's *Individual Psychology* is corrective and curative as well as analytical. By integrating the man with his community, it systematizes the making of personality. Self-knowledge is the natural means to the understanding of others. But on the other hand, a man may have a sound understanding of his fellows and yet remain stubbornly blind to his own weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, irrational

prejudices, antipathies, and general defects of character. Hence self-objectification is necessary as well as self-extension; self-appraisal as well as self-expression.

#### THE WILL-TO-ACHIEVEMENT

All this presupposes two things further; first that we shall be in agreement on the ends and ideals to be sought; and secondly that if ways to these ends and ideals be acceptable the will-to-achievement will also be forthcoming. The correction of character-defects cannot be achieved by reading a book, however faithfully it may dissect and lay bare the truth about ourselves. In the last analysis, the maturing personality must tap its own resources. The whole problem of the Will is treated at some length in Chapter IX, but at the outset let it be realized that as we come now to 'look upon this picture', it must be consciously a self-portrait. No one can even touch it up for you. The development of personality awaits the will-to-achieve. Of the many persons inside us, some must be repressed, others encouraged. If our inventory musters a somewhat motley crew, reflect upon the strange saying of the enigmatic James Joyce: 'Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love. But always meeting ourselves.'<sup>1</sup> That is the making of personality—grappling with our inward plurality.

#### (1) *Enlightened Self-Assertiveness*

'Those who believe that they are exclusively in the right are generally those who achieve something.'

ALDOUS HUXLEY

<sup>1</sup> *Ulysses*.

A man's achievements in life will be good or worthless or mischievous according to the measure of enlightenment which accompanies his assertiveness. Dictators degenerate because no one dare enlighten them. Themselves they will not inform. It used to be said that fanatics are always sincere. Now we have our doubts about that.

But this is not a political pamphlet. We are dealing in smaller coins than sovereigns. And unenlightened self-assertiveness need not assume cosmic proportions in order to be baneful. Who has not suffered at the hands of the good neighbour who cannot see us tie up a parcel, change a tyre, carve a roast or fill a pipe—without thrusting upon us a better way, which is to say *his* way. He may be a harmless, well-meaning individual, but we nevertheless consign him to perdition for his sheer lack of *nous*. The follies and clumsiness of others are his special *métier*, and his ego demands that he set them right. What then is 'enlightened' self-assertiveness?

Modesty, altruism and selflessness can become vices if they immolate the personality. Service to others ceases to be any sort of duty when it involves the despoliation of the Self. Anchorism and asceticism have been so persistently futile as a means of saving either the individual or the world that to flay them is poor sport. But it would be sheer pretence to suggest that we have as yet fully appreciated the merits of enlightened self-assertion.

That lengthy catalogue of the medico's social responsibilities, the Hippocratic Precepts, while enjoining a selfless service to the community, nevertheless adds a codicil: 'but also to care for one's own Self, so as to observe what is seemly'. Pietism has much to answer for in its despoite to human personality

by denying all self-assertiveness. It was for this that Nietzsche most hated the Pale Galilean—his other-worldly meekness.

To have regard to the inviolability of one's own Self equally with the self of others, demands that in every man's personality there should be a mediate place for enlightened assertiveness.

When Lord Melbourne asked Mr. Disraeli if he would like to become private secretary to a minister of the Crown, he replied that he would rather be a Minister himself; indeed, he meant to be Prime Minister some day. Instead of expressing ridicule or anger at this audacity, the Prime Minister talked over the difficulties of the enterprise and the improbability of success. It was afterwards, when the death of Lord George Bentinck left the Opposition without a head that someone told Melbourne 'the Tories have taken Disraeli for their leader'. To which the old fox replied: 'Have they! Then the fellow will do it after all.'

It would have been a conscious violation of himself and his realized capacities had Disraeli accepted the minor post with some insincere self-deprecatory remark. His justification lay in his subsequent career; but even at that time, it would have been false modesty for him to have dissembled and affected gratitude for something he knew to be beneath him. Enlightened self-assertion demanded that he find adequate self-extension. That he was a coxcomb has no bearing upon this particular incident. His inordinate vanity was supported at too many points of brilliance to be mere pretension.

We may safely leave self-denial and self-mortification to the Simon Stylites of the world, who, sitting upon their humility, deny their god-head and their usefulness.

The real saints have been those who kept their other-worldliness in due proportion and found full self-expression even in this vale of tears. As Shaw says of his namesake, Bernard of Clairvaux: 'His temper was so controlled, his disposition so sweet, his intellect so penetrating, his values so divine, that in the turbulent twelfth century, he, a mendicant monk promoted Abbot, was able to make warring emperors and robber barons see reason and ensure peace.'<sup>1</sup> Those then who see great virtue in the sacrificial life are here confronted with a shining example of the holier assertiveness.

But on the other extreme, when assertiveness and self-esteem pass blindly into egotism, the disbalance may be ludicrous or offensive or both. Egotism is a besetting sin of artists, whose whole existence depends upon holding the centre of the stage, as witness this passage in plumes: 'Those years with Diaghileff and his ballet were the means of instilling into me a knowledge of my art that I shall never forget. I might have become a fine dancer, for I suppose I can say I have all the natural attributes necessary, but I doubt if I should ever have become the artist and world-famous dancer that I am had it not been for him.'<sup>2</sup>

Why is it possible to approve of the Disraeli incident, yet disapprove of the Dolin? Both men were justified in holding high views of their own capacities, the one no less than the other. Dolin's note is false because there is a way of saying these things, and this is not. it. The writing of autobiography has peculiar indulgences, but Dolin differs from Disraeli in that his self-expression appears to be largely self-esteem.

<sup>1</sup> *Everybody's Political What's What.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ballet Go Round*, Anton Dolin.



As for the second sort of egotism, the offensive kind, Macaulay's diatribe on Boswell is well enough known: 'Servile and impertinent, shallow and pedantic, a bigot and a sot, bloated with family pride, and eternally blustering about the dignity of a born gentleman, yet stooping to be a tale-bearer, an eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London.'<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, that same contemptible Boswell was singularly perceptive of worth in another. He had at least the wit to discern Johnson's greatness, though he was too egotistical to set it down in any other form than a memorial to himself. He, too, spills his conceit all over what purports to be the life of another.

Enlightened Self-assertion holds ever a precarious balance. So little divides it from arrogance.

## (2) *Interest in others*

'To know when one's self is interested is the first condition of interesting other people.'

J. R. RANDALL, *Marius the Epicurean*

We have already seen how the process of introception widens our spheres of interest. The pattern of life tends to become communal instead of self-centred. Marriage has been cited as a salutary example of the process. The advent of children still further enlarges these circles of interest. It can be said with strictest accuracy that the fullest development of personality is impossible without the offices of parenthood. As our children grow up, we come with them to a new maturity. Gradually, almost insensibly, we find the centre of gravity in our thinking shifting from our own ambitions, our own career, and our own satisfactions—to theirs. Our golf grows rusty as we

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*.

find a greater compulsion in accompanying the boy to the college games. Our personal preference for a quiet week-end at home yields to the family's choice, the beach. The children's education takes priority over the long-cherished plan for an overseas visit.

You are the trip I did not make;  
You are the pearls I cannot buy;  
You are my blue Italian lake;  
You are my piece of foreign sky.<sup>1</sup>

This is less a matter of heroic resignation than of natural law whereby our own personality is enriched as its interests widen and broaden. No parent would consent for a moment that such introception is loss.

It is unnecessary to stroke this platitude till it purrs like an epigram. Sufficient to make the point that the extension of our interest through the family is the truest extension of our Self. Here is another authentic mark of the maturing personality.

### (3) *Wisdom and Judgement*

'Everyone complains of his memory, and no one complains of his judgement.'

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

Wisdom is happily not the peculiar possession of 'successful' men. A life of rapid and singular success in material aggregation not uncommonly brings little wisdom. It is the uncelebrated who are frequently rich in sagacity, sober in counsel and ripe of judgement. One of our acutest thinkers—Sir Norman Angell—has confessed that the most remarkable character he ever knew was an illiterate cow-hand whose bunk-house philosophy taught the young Englishman more than he ever learned in the famous public schools

<sup>1</sup> *To My Child*, Anne Campbell.

of his own country. This tribute is made by a man whom the *Spectator* has described as a 'type of mind reminiscent of the great encyclopædists of the French eighteenth century'.

The man in search of wisdom discovers sooner or later with Seneca that 'No man was ever wise by chance', and that judgement is theirs who win it for themselves. These qualities of the mature personality rest upon habitual restraint, deliberation of thought and a right scale of values. McDougall summarizes it thus: 'Judgement does not comport well with impetuosity and enthusiasm; for it requires that all aspects of the problem in hand shall be envisaged and due weight given to each one.'<sup>1</sup>

What is wisdom? We have said that it comes with habitual restraint. The man whose emotional life is rich and colourful has some difficulty in subordinating impulse to restraint. But the very fact of his sensitive awareness may well give him those other factors in wisdom—a right sense and scale of values. He whose imaginative processes are vivid and lively is not characteristically cautious and calculating. But he, more than his sober companion, is alive to the world's accreted wisdom and its treasures of deliberate thought. He knows, for instance, that Raphael paints wisdom; Handel sings it; Phidias carves it; Shakespeare writes it; Wren builds it; Watt mechanizes it; Smuts speaks it. So by reflection upon these values, the receptive mind becomes wise with their wisdom.

The self-centred, therefore, cannot attain to wisdom.

What is judgement? A man's judgement is as sound as the breadth of thought and experience he can bring to the point at issue. Experience is the process of becoming expert by experiment. No man

<sup>1</sup> *Character and the Conduct of Life*, p. 149.

is born with judgement as a gift from the Creator. It comes to him through life itself as it is lived out intelligently. Judgement is the opposite of fanaticism, which Jung assures us is found only in individuals who are compensating secret uncertainties. Judgement is the opposite of exaggeration, for exaggeration is nothing but a truth that has lost its judgement. Judgement is the opposite of loose assumption, and careless observation and wishful thinking, the cardinal faults of the modern temper.

As we watch men reaching their conclusions, we note how over-enthusiasm conspires against sound judgement.

A literary critic discovers that Shakespeare's eldest child was born with suspicious precipitateness. Ergo—in Elizabethan times, courtship carried the rights of marriage! Froude puts down Henry VIII's divorce of Catherine of Aragon solely to reasons of State. Contrariwise, Bishop Creighton could see in the event only lust. But Henry seldom did anything with a single motive.

A famous churchman lecturing on the Cromwellian period, attributes the Great Rebellion solely to a religious motive, thereby scamping all the painstaking research of half a hundred careful chroniclers. A learned judge at Bristol could as lately as the '20's solemnly pose the question 'whether a person was a criminal by virtue of birth, or was made so by environment'. Here is a man dispensing professional judgement yet he does not know that Ferri must be taken with Lombroso, and is unaware that he poses a false dilemma.

Newton could apply his prodigious mathematical faculty to drawing a chronology of the world on the assumption that it was created in the year 4004 B.C.

And the State of Alberta was for years directed by a political intelligence which devoutly believed the same fantastic myth.

The Thirty Years War about Transubstantiation is matched by the Second World War about Aryanism.

This vassalage to superficial thinking subverts judgement at its source.

(4) *Tolerance and Balance*

‘A man is capable of understanding . . . how the ether vibrates, and what’s going on in the sun. But how any other man can blow his nose differently from himself—that he is incapable of understanding.’

TURGENIEV<sup>1</sup>

These two further characteristics of the maturing personality are in fact the distillate of a number of other traits, notably sympathy, temperateness and cultivation.

Van Loon died before he could incorporate the supreme example into his history of human intolerance.<sup>2</sup> His book ends where so much began—1940. It is a melancholy story written always in blood and tears.

Where so many have written against intolerance in general, Voltaire fought it in particular. And whence came that intrepidity of soul which so spiritedly defended Jean Calas? Is it special pleading to find at least the seeds of Voltaire’s protest in the physical frailty which necessitated his baptism the day after birth? Or to trace its continued provocation in the grotesquerie of his bodily presence throughout life?

It is customary to regard the three years’ exile in London as the triumphant conquest of such friends as Congreve and Pope, Bolingbroke and Walpole. But

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers and Children.*

<sup>2</sup> *Tolerance.*

in the earthy period of George II a stranger in the streets of London was likely to receive rough treatment at the hands of its inhabitants. It was Voltaire's experience to be selected for such unwelcome attentions by the apprentices and roughs of the City. Obviously a foreigner unable to boast of British blood, his gnome-like physique promised fair game for their blood-sport. The incident has been used traditionally as a setting for the ready wit by which the dishevelled and menaced Frenchman extricated himself from an ugly situation. The rather might it be regarded as symbolic of that which constantly befell this champion of tolerance, and which indeed made him such. It was one thing to stammer out 'Brave Englishmen, am I not already unfortunate enough in not having been born among you?' and thereby effect his escape from bodily violence. It was quite another for the author of the mocking, bitter plays to reflect at leisure upon mob violence. If Voltaire left England an Anglophile it could scarcely have been attributable to such incidents as this.

The intolerance inspired by the dogmatic spirit suffers no dissent from its own or the generally accepted course or view. So stoning the prophets survives, nor lacks a Stephen as cloakholder. Every hortatory writer has for centuries been crying this gospel, as cry it men must pending that millennium in which no man's intolerance shall make afraid, and God shall wipe away all tears.

Tolerance is so queenly a virtue of the personality because only through its offices may man or society advance at all. It is as much a quality of the character as an attitude of the mind: it is a function of the whole personality, implying an integrity of purpose no less than a balance of thought.

Bradlaugh's justly-celebrated defence against Northcote's motion that he should not be allowed to take the oath contains the essence of the masquerade of intolerance as righteousness: others too have said that whenever an infringement of freedom is attempted, it is always attempted on the person of someone obnoxious, for whom sentiment will not so readily be provoked.

In such guise intolerance infects the least likely personalities.

(5) *Friendliness and Gentleness*

'What would you have? Your gentleness shall force  
More than your force move us to gentleness.'

*As You Like It*, Act II, Sc. 7

The strength of friendliness is qualitative rather than quantitative. It is natural to admire—perhaps envy—the person whose essential friendliness acts like a charm in any situation.

But is gentleness as admirable or as useful?

Only under the qualification of appropriateness, a reservation applicable to all these qualities of character. Out of due place and proportion any virtue may become incongruous.

That gentleness which makes a personality gracious as well as strong is not merely the happy accident of birth. Some men attain it against all inherited disposition.

Such a one was that most harrowed and tragic of essayists, Charles Lamb. Against the sombre background of hereditary madness the gentle Elia earned the pseudonym which he first borrowed from the 'gay and lighthearted foreigner' who had been his colleague in those dusty days when life was compassed by the walls of South Sea House.

For thirty-three years Lamb was a clerk chained to the desks of London's trading concerns. Not till the Directors of the East India House gave him a pension and set him free to fulfil his destiny could he write to Wordsworth: 'After these years of slavery, here I am a free man.' To gain that freedom took a whole soul's tasking.

Shadows worse than clerical bondage surrounded Lamb from the beginning. The family inheritance was faulty. His unhappy sister Mary, in a fit of madness, stabbed their mother to death. Unable to endure the thought of her permanent confinement in a lunatic asylum, Charles undertook to care for her himself. He set up house with her, and for thirty years remained her devoted guardian. There is in all literature no finer account of selfless sublimation than this; nor a better illustration of the grace of gentleness. The whole pattern of Lamb's life is of unceasing devotion to this afflicted sister. His contemporaries have left us the sorrowful picture of Charles, leading Mary by the hand and carrying her strait-jacket, walking across the fields to Hoxton where she could be confined till the oncoming attack should pass. Both would be weeping in their private despair. Presently she would recover, and their life together would resume—till the next attack.

That Lamb could remain kindly and gentle: that his writings should reflect sweetness and light is remarkable enough. But that Hazlitt could say of his personality, 'the most delightful and the most pleasantly provoking, the most witty and sensible of men', is a luminous example of how gentleness can attain what is denied to force.

The debunkers have, of course, been ferreting, writing down the essayist as a maudlin sentimentalist



with a vein of tipsy jocularità; a shallow nature with an equally shallow mind. Sufficient to reply that Coleridge and Wordsworth loved him, Shelley would have longed for his society, and Hazlitt admired him greatly. That Carlyle found in him nothing but a 'stammering Tomfool, a rickety gasping tippler', is a reflection upon Carlyle—not upon Lamb. Carlyle, the worshipper of heroes, could find the admirable only among the dead.

True, Lamb was a poor physical specimen, with his undernourished body, spindle legs, eyes of different hue, speech defect and freakishness in company. In lesser men, these handicaps have produced acerbity, hostility and bitterness of character. Had he dipped his pen in gall, analytical psychology could readily have found extenuation. Yet from this harrowed soil sprang Lamb's amiability and humour, his solicitude and gentleness. He did not dissolve in self-pity as an oddity. He made himself the friend of criminals, vindicating many from the cruel judgements of the time.

As an incurable stammerer he talked badly. But in his flowing fancies he wrote nobly. He tried the edge of words lovingly, and vices glowed like virtues when he defended the unfortunate. His sympathy enabled him to limn London and its queer people more ingratiatingly than any other writer except Dickens.

As a critic of rare insight and perspicacity, his wit never became mordant. Having learned in suffering what he taught in song, Lamb abides as a classic instance of the gentle personality. His was a notable triumph of character over circumstance.

#### (6) *Generosity and Loyalty*

'The sensuous joy of magnanimity,' TURGENIEV  
*Fathers and Sons*, Ch. XVII

Commendation of these transparent virtues might seem superfluous were it not for the basic confusion which identifies generosity with benefactions and loyalty with patriotism.

Benefactions and patriotism are fortunately very common. Generosity is one of the rarest qualities. By common acceptance, a wealthy man who makes frequent and considerable donations to public causes is said to be 'generous'. Without being churlish it is possible to suggest alternative explanations. Generosity cannot be gauged by any cash nexus, for it is more properly 'liberality of soul'. Magnanimity is the true synonym.

Another exemplification may serve the point; the familiar one of Mr. Churchill opposing the policies of the Baldwin-Chamberlain administration. In warning the nation of the inevitable consequences of its supineness, he predicted the ultimate ignobility to which appeasement must come. Then Chamberlain fell. Churchill came to his hour at a time when all about him lay the sombre proofs of his perspicuity. The broken shards of his predecessor's reputation could have been exhibited in a hundred well-turned phrases. Remembering those bitter years in the wilderness, what man could have stayed his retaliation? After having ignored him through these tragic years, the nation had summoned Cassandra to shoulder the burden of their neglect. What a harsh and scornful 'I told you so' could have been his.

Yet you will search Churchill's speeches in vain for any such thing. That is magnanimity.

He and Chamberlain had engaged in a hundred battles, and because of their physical proximity to each other in the House it had been almost a case of hand-to-hand fighting.<sup>1</sup> Yet on this occasion, when

<sup>1</sup> *Men, Martyrs and Mountebanks*, Beverley Baxter.

Chamberlain's sword was broken, Churchill stepped back and saluted his humbled opponent in one of his finest utterances. In that incident Churchill was at his greatest. That is generosity.

But magnanimity need not assume such heroic proportions. It appears in a multitude of small matters, and it has always this character—it costs a great deal to give whatever is involved, unless the man is one of those happy persons whose nature is intrinsically magnanimous. They are few.

The employer who gives his staff a bonus because three-fourths of it will come out of taxation may be astute, but he is not generous. The schoolmaster who spends his considerable private fortune to build an ideal school, and then ensures its perpetuity by deeding the entire property to the nation may be held to be munificent, but not magnanimous.

The pertinence of all this is that generosity of spirit, this quality so devoutly to be desired in personality, is cultivable.

What need be said of the quality of loyalty? or said better than:

‘Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,  
Loyal and neutral, in a moment?’

Few indeed. Loyalty is essentially a social virtue. It posits community. Dostoyevsky assures his readers that ‘the true security is to be found in social solidarity rather than in an isolated individual effort.’<sup>1</sup> It is a lesson we learn with painful slowness. The story of mankind's laboured evolution is from an unabashed and predatory individualism wherein every man's hand was against his brother's, through ceaseless conflict to a fitful co-operation. Not till the glimmerings

<sup>1</sup> *The Brothers Karamazov*, Part ii, Book 6, Ch. II.

of tribal loyalty emerged did man defeat the mammoth and the mastodon. The individual follows the same slow extension. Yet so tenuous is the hold of co-operation upon the human mind that periodically we revert to anarchy. This is basically the concept of Smuts's Holism; the apprehension of society as the supreme loyalty.

In the business world elementary co-operation is indispensable. Corporate life would fall apart without it. Even in gangland there appear to be fierce loyalties, though to be sure, that seems more a prudential matter of hanging together rather than separately. In family life there is nothing that leaves us so bewildered as disloyalty between its members. It is this which makes marital infidelity so hurtful a thing. He is beyond all appeal who finds in life no commanding loyalties.

Yet employers say that this quality is a diminishing quantity in modern business. The acerbities of class-war, the indiscriminate use of the weapon of direct action, absenteeism, and personal irresponsibility appear to have reduced industrial co-operation to a low ebb. Is this due to a corresponding diminution of the things able to command loyalty? Why should an employee feel any sacred loyalty to a disembodied allotment of B-preference shares? Is not the de-personalization of business at least a contributing cause of waning loyalties? Loyalty is possible only as between personalities. Even patriotism requires a symbolic head to personalize country and flag and cause. Larger loyalties in business would seem to predicate personalities capable of attracting and as loyalty requiring them.

As for domestic and family loyalty, the same healthy principle applies and with greater force. Loyalty

begets loyalty. The personality rich in friendships has already discovered that for himself.

(7) *Prudence*

‘One virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence—often the only one that is left us at 72.’

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

One of the smoothest things in *Kai Lung's Golden Hours* is the admonition: ‘Do not adjust your sandals while passing through a melon field; nor yet arrange your hat beneath an orange tree.’<sup>1</sup> The virtue of prudence best becomes us whenever and wherever a word or an act may be susceptible of misinterpretation. Life being what it is—and observers what they are—we have in fact come to identify prudence with caution.

This, however, is far from being the word's full cargo. For the Greeks it had a positive rather than a negative meaning. It stood for the practical knowledge of those things in life which should be sought, not those which should be avoided. So all-embracing was the virtue of prudence that for them it was indeed the greatest good; more precious even than philosophy, since from it sprang all the other virtues. Gradually, with the effluxion of time, the word has become associated more with abstentions than pursuits, so that to-day, prudence is associated principally with injunctions about looking before we leap and apothegms as to standing behind a bull but in front of a mule.

This is prudence become pusillanimous. Small wonder that the virtue is less regarded nowadays than formerly. Without knowing what has happened to the word through the long centuries, men sense its incompleteness, and thinking of it as only a negative quality, set it aside for use in old age when the blood

<sup>1</sup> By Ernest Bramah.

runs cooler and restraints sit more lightly. Has not Emerson applied his strictures on 'the world filled with the proverbs and the acts and the winkings of a base prudence; a prudence which adores the Rule of Three, which never subscribes, which never gives, which seldom lends, and asks but one question of any project—Will it bake bread?'<sup>1</sup>

Mark Twain shall have the last word on this virtue in a passage to be prinked out with a very blue ribbon. 'It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things; freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practise either.'<sup>2</sup>

#### (8) *Taste and Discrimination*

'One ought every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and if it be possible, to speak a few reasonable words.'

GOETHE<sup>3</sup>

W. S. Gilbert informed us some time since that we cannot get high æsthetic tastes like trousers—ready-made. No amount of exhortation can inculcate a love for the finer things of life. A daily song, when to a great many people all music is alike? While music can be the golden road to Samarkand it may also fork to the African kraal.

Goethe's 'good poems' and 'fine pictures', to say nothing of his 'reasonable words', would seem to be for the few. That ebullient personality, Sir Thomas Beecham, may believe firmly that good music and fine art must be inflicted on the people.<sup>4</sup> His autobiography

<sup>1</sup> *Essays*, First Series.

<sup>2</sup> *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar*.

<sup>3</sup> *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, Book V, Ch. II.

<sup>4</sup> *A Mingled Chime*.

at least challenges Santayana's despairing view that music is essentially useless.

But General Grant used to say that he could dance very well if it weren't for the music: that always put him off. When he went to Rome there was no disguising the fact that he appreciated pictures and statuary even less than music. He refused to admire the Marcus Aurelius at the Capitol, though his guide thought he liked the horse. He stalked clean through the Vatican with never a sideward glance. The Apollo and the Laocoon never even registered, but he did scent the cooking and remarked on its relish wafted up from the kitchens below.

'We may live without poetry, music and art;  
We may live without conscience and live without heart;  
We may live without friends; we may live without books,  
But civilized man cannot live without Cooks.'

LORD LYTON

What æsthetic values may reasonably be hoped from mass-education? What canons of good taste and discrimination may be enjoined as of authority? It will not do to say that a man of good taste avoids all swagger and ostentation: two of the most successful fighting generals of the recent war were notorious for their flamboyant personalities. Another—equally brilliant—equally successful—was at all times a model of good form.

We in the Dominions find English public-school manners tiresome: the Americans regard us New Zealanders as incredible back-woodsmen. In the Antipodes we consider Scots people as dominated by moody achievement, whether it be in business, architecture, or religion. Bernard Shaw felt among us as did Magellan amidst the Patagonians.

All youthful nations, like all youthful individuals, feel a certain subdued regret that they cannot acquire maturity quickly. Nowhere is this more applicable than in matters of taste and discrimination.

That personality which chooses gracious living for its own sake, and not merely for impression on others, reflects discrimination and taste. McDougall calls a man of taste 'a connoisseur of conduct'. He will be sensitive to the difference between a kind act clumsily performed, and one that is also graceful and unobtrusive. He will express appreciation without gush and criticism without malice. But the mature personality can no more be stereotyped than can its physiognomy.

(9) *Candour and Moral Courage*

'On an occasion of this kind it becomes more than a moral duty to speak one's mind. It becomes a pleasure.'

OSCAR WILDE<sup>1</sup>

We all know moral courage when we see it. From the approved histories however, we might conclude that it is more to be found in great than in small things. The world knows and admires the strength and fortitude of great personalities, from Franklin Roosevelt to Dr. Albert Schweitzer, from Ibn Sa'ud to Pandit Nehru, from Jacob Epstein to Jan Smuts. Their struggles in their respective spheres have manifested a high degree of moral courage. But hero-worship has always been a substitute for personal attainment. Our methods of teaching history make it such by a too-enthusiastic use of pedestals. The resultant attitude is admiration rather than emulation.

<sup>1</sup> *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Act II.



Why are such universally admired qualities as candour and moral courage not more universally encountered? Why the unpretty convention that though we know a business associate to be a rascal, we maintain a mask of cordiality, cultivate him, invite him to our homes while privately expressing our contempt for men of his kidney? With Mr. Snagsby, not to put too fine a point upon it, why such precious hypocrisy and on so many occasions?

The real reason is not that we are all degenerates. It is rather that the moral sentiments are so complex, and society so be-devilling. How can a man be sure that in any given situation, to be candid is to be kind! We know so little of others, so little of circumstance. Having given his hostages to fortune, can a family man indulge the luxury of plain speaking as he would wish? In fact, do we not register a high degree of moral courage by containing ourselves, conforming to economic necessity and generally enduring the unendurable?

We shrink from an inflexible candour and an aggressive moral determination because there is overmuch uncharity in the world already. Who would wish to live with a man who is as conscientiously candid as he is punctual? By common consent life is a serious business, but who can tolerate the fellow who sees it as nothing else and whose moral courage is undeviatingly aggressive?

Adverting to that rascally business associate: if he happens to be your employer in the midst of a depression, are we nevertheless committed to absolute honesty and candour though it cost us our job? May it not be moral courage of an uncommonly high order to grit one's teeth, stifle personal dislikes and conform? Of course; that is common sense. Unswerving candour

number of new military decorations, the Order of Suvarrov, called attention to the name and fame of a Czarist hero-general, it also revived a legend. This eighteenth-century Count carried candour and moral courage to extraordinary lengths. Expressing openly his contempt for the multitude of prigs and incompetents who fawned upon Catherine II, he was banished from the Court. Recalled to lead the armies of Russia, he made his appearance in civilian clothes without sword or decoration orders. When the Emperor Paul rebuked him, Suvarrov threw himself on his stomach and began to crawl over the floor to the foot of the throne. As he said: 'I also wish to make my way in this Court, and I know it is only by crawling that one can get into your Majesty's good graces.'

Suvarrov's candour cost him the Emperor's favour once and for all, which doubtless commends him to the Russia of to-day. But the essential point might easily be overlooked. He was immune from even an Emperor's fury, since he was wealthy, of noble birth, and—had behind him an army. The gentle reader must not aspire to such courage unless he too possesses as many sturdy assets.

#### (10) *Modesty*

'The true way to be deceived is to think oneself more knowing than others.'

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

Modesty cannot properly be described as a virtue, for though its appearance may be assumed, intrinsically it cannot be acquired. As a native disposition it is like blue eyes or a sunny temperament—the gift of the gods. It is an attitude of mind rather than a

simple social grace. Some people are naturally free of conceit, harbouring no high thoughts of themselves. The dissembler attempts to conceal any inward persuasion as to his own excellence, knowing that what is important is the seeming rather than the being. In this it is apparent that modesty is of two sorts, whose difference may be discerned in two famous personalities of our time: T. E. Lawrence and Joseph Stalin.

Lawrence was an incomprehensible man made no whit more understandable by the biographies—even his own. At twenty-six, when he made his plunge from archaeological research into military service, he had resolved to become a general and be knighted by the time he was thirty. By the time these things were within his reach he had shed such ideas completely. Such ambition as survived in him was for achievement without adornment.

Completely devoid of the normal man's appetites of body, aloof from all urges of sex or conviviality, undominated by the competitive and possessive instincts, Lawrence was a complete eccentric; a genius with a pathological modesty. In the desert he preferred to wear no badges of the rank thrust upon him. He refused all the honours offered him during and after the war, and asked only that he be permitted to contract out of a world which had so disappointed him. What he wanted is not quite clear. Perhaps he never knew himself. There was the failure of the British Government to honour its undertakings to the Arab world, but there were and still are many sides to that difficult question. That can only be regarded as incidental to the man's fixed determination to escape from society. Lawrence was just unassimilable to any community. When he entered the Royal Air Force as Aircraftsman T. E. Shaw, he refused to

give orders and actually classed himself as an illiterate. He died as he had lived, an impish enigma. But there can be no doubt of his inordinate modesty.

Joseph Stalin, on the other hand, is not a modest man. But he has assumed a modesty. This is no doubt part of his fundamental ideology. When a delegation leader once addressed him as 'great and beloved leader', Stalin dryly interrupted him, 'Let's try to manage without the "great" and the "leader", comrade'.

Because he is diametrically different from all that T. E. Lawrence was, Stalin chose an altogether different method of expressing his character and personality. He has risen from obscurity to the summit of power as the most sovereign individual on earth. He too prefers to live without official title or even a cabinet portfolio; but in his case these reticences are political expedients, rather than natural expressions of himself. Not until recent times when he had to sign treaties and concert military operations with Russia's allies did he even allow himself to be dubbed Premier and Marshal. But that is intrinsic to Soviet republicanism rather than Stalin's own personality.

Thus the point emerges: that for practical purposes it is immaterial whether modesty be natural or acquired. The persona—the mask of personality—seeks a modest bearing since it covets social approval. Without this, its other qualities are insufficient.

#### SUMMARY

Relativity notwithstanding, there is a scale of desirable qualities of character by which we are judged in our daily contacts. This is expressed in the tacit ideal of our particular community.

We are expected to be reasonably assertive, interested in others, and to exercise wisdom and judgement, tolerance and balance, friendliness and gentleness, generosity and loyalty, prudence, taste and discrimination, candour and moral courage—and modesty: all in their appropriate degree and proper place.

Within this ideal pattern, common sense allows that we must vary characteristically, finding our own ways of expressing these mutable qualities of mind and character. But the proscriptions of social living bear automatically upon any considerable deviation from the approved pattern. The man who wishes to be happy must either conform—or live solitarily.

The discussion of each desired quality has shown that they are less counsels of perfection than counsels of performance; they constitute a pattern not shown us on the Mount, but hammered out by uninspired experience as necessary for harmony within the Self and within society.

While admitting that human nature can scarcely hope to embody all its ideals, it has been contended that it is necessary to have standards and to direct one's personality toward clearly-perceived and sanctioned ends. The achievement of those ideals rests, in the last analysis, with the man's own will.

What we are, and say, and do, add up to our style of life, and the purpose of any self-analysis is toward reconciliation of our way of life with that of our community. If our ideals are superior to those of our community, our duty is clearly to exemplify the more excellent way. If they are inferior to those of our fellows we have an equally clear duty to perform.

The processes by which we achieve a maturing personality in a developing society are those of self-expression and self-subordination. Each desirable

quality calls for the due exercise of both these instinctive impulses. As between the two, the happy man strikes a balance. The widening spheres of social responsibility set certain limits to his individualism, but his individuality has a contribution to make to the common weal. His personality thus becomes good and useful as it reaches this equilibrium between self-interest and self-discipline.

The qualities we have reviewed are offered tentatively as characteristics of the desirable personality.

If this chapter has been overly on the side of the angels, there is warrant for such an approach in John Drinkwater's lines:

‘When the high heart we magnify,  
And the clear vision celebrate,  
And worship greatness passing by;  
Ourselves are great.’

#### THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questions for this chapter have been designed to reveal a minus (—), a normal, and a plus (+) development of personality under the various headings.

By checking your answers with the following Key, you will have some indication of the degree of maturity reflected in your answers. If you have been able adequately and fairly to express yourself in the answers, they will disclose your basic attitudes to a number of situations.

The values for your scoring are:

1. *Enlightened Self-Assertiveness*: (a) normal (b) + (c) —
2. *Interest in others*: (a) — (b) normal (c) +
3. *Wisdom and Judgement*: (a) — (b) + (c) normal
4. *Tolerance and Balance*: (a) + (b) — (c) normal
5. *Gentleness and Friendliness*: (a) + (b) normal (c) —

- |                                      |            |     |            |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----|------------|------------|
| 6. <i>Generosity and Loyalty:</i>    | (a)        | +   | (b) normal | (c) —      |
| 7. <i>Prudence:</i>                  | (a)        | +   | (b) normal | (c) —      |
| 8. <i>Taste and Discrimination:</i>  | (a)        | +   | (b) normal | (c) —      |
| 9. <i>Candour and Moral Courage:</i> | (a) normal | (b) | +          | (c) —      |
| 10. <i>Modesty:</i>                  | (a)        | +   | (b) —      | (c) normal |

Manifestly too much cannot be concluded from any brief questionnaire on so inconclusive a matter as personal standards of character and conduct. The questions may or may not elicit your real attitude. There may not even be agreement as to the criteria of maturity here submitted. There has been little discernible agreement as to the nature of the good life, and even less as to the ideal personality. What is here posed is a simple ideal of character which at least will never find itself in the painful position of Alexander.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER IV

Note by an affirmative or negative answer such conclusions as you are able to reach on the following questions.

1. *Can you profit by sharp criticism, irrespective of its source?* .....
2. *If you have a sense of grievance, do you tend to talk about it rather than think about it?* .....
3. *Can you brook opposition and irritating delay, i.e. can you bide your time?* .....
4. *If you are subjected to a snub or a depreciation do you laugh it off?* .....
5. *Have you found that experience keeps a hard school?* .....
6. *Are you quickly aware of giving offence, or hurting the feelings of others?* .....
7. *Do you pride yourself on frankness and bluntness?* .....
8. *In discussions with wife or close friend, do you ever confess to mistakes, and reproach yourself?* .....
9. *Can you and do you apologize freely and handsomely to those affected by your mistakes?* .....
10. *If worsted in anything, do you brood over it and plan to get your own back? To get even, as it were?* .....



11. *Are you tolerant of modes of living and ways of thinking other than your own?* .....
12. *Do you enjoy retailing the mistakes of others, to their public discomfiture?* .....
13. *Do you generally deliberate before reaching decisions?* .....
14. *Do you reflect quite a deal on possible misfortunes?* .....
15. *Have you a strongly defined conscience about conduct?* .....
16. *Are you temperamentally dogmatic and opinionated about most things?* .....
17. *Do you find it difficult to 'change your mind' and re-fashion your opinions?* .....
18. *Are you often reproached for 'jumping to conclusions'?* .....
19. *Can you work happily with associates and give due weight to their views and ideas?* .....
20. *Have you ever kept a diary?* .....
21. *Are you cautious about lending money?* .....
22. *Do you ever laugh with someone about your own mistakes?* .....
23. *Do you tend to rely on others rather than yourself for the things you desire?* .....
24. *Do you find yourself remedying mistakes by getting up on the facts you lacked in making them?* .....
25. *Before reaching a conclusion, do you find yourself making a thoughtful analysis, trying to balance fundamental features against incidental?* .....

26. *Can you note in yourself certain dispositional weaknesses and limitations?* .....
27. *Do you think it good to forgive, but not to forget?* .....
28. *Have you found out for yourself the mistakes arising from mental and emotional undiscipline?* .....
29. *Have you formed a preference for learning by the mistakes of others?* .....
30. *Are you readily able to criticize yourself as these questionnaires demand?* .....

At the end of Chapter IV will be found a rating-scale by which your answers may afford some self-analysis.

## CHAPTER IV

### ON PROFITING BY OUR MISTAKES

'I can pardon everybody's mistakes except my own.'

CATO

PIERRE JANET the French psycho-therapist used to say that some day we shall periodically balance the mind's accounts as we do those of a business firm. Since no psychologist seems as yet to have devised a set of books for keeping such dispositional accounts, introspection must suffice. Every man must be his own auditor, seeking a trial balance of character, hoping that his personality will show a favourable profit and loss account.

Even our machines are the better for periodic overhaul. But a machine cannot overhaul itself; and there is an academic opinion that men are in little better case. Professor W. B. Pillsbury says: 'No rules can be given for making the unfertile brain fertile, nor for the better use of the healthy brain.'<sup>1</sup> Those of us who live in counting houses and offices and workshops rather than ivory castles, know that there are sharp penalties operating against the brains who in business will not constantly achieve better use. Economic competition is a veritable trial by ordeal, and survival depends upon the capacity to learn by mistakes—preferably those of others.

The alert business personality does not willingly

<sup>1</sup> *Fundamentals of Psychology.*

deliver himself into the hands of his adversary. He prefers the less sanguinary method of careful analysis of his own and others' errors. Efficiency requires that he locate their source and erect his own safeguards against their recurrence. It is admittedly difficult to retrace our steps and reconstruct objectively a costly experience. Rather than admit mistakes we tend to put up an emotional smoke-screen in self-justification. Seeking to make excuses for the past, blinds the eyes and seals the brain.

In this chapter we shall essay a method of personal stocktaking. What part of our temperament is not paying its way? are we too often and too much dominated by snap-judgements rather than cool appraisal? Do we persistently make the same tactical mistakes? Is there some myopia of the mind's eye which blurs the facts and clouds decision? Are some personal idiosyncrasies affecting harmfully my relations with others? What is disbalanced in my approach to life?

These questions are not easy of answer, for reasons that will be increasingly evident. Nevertheless, most success-literature affirms that by careful self-appraisal we may arrive at some by no means unprofitable conclusions. The point usually overlooked by these efficiency writers is that 'It is one thing to show a man that he is in the wrong, and another to put him in possession of truth'.<sup>1</sup> Nor is that changeable counter, truth, to be found in copy-book maxims and exhortations, because any such general approach fails to take account of individual problems. Problems of personality are always particular—not general. We are not in search of perfectionism. But we cannot correct a bias till we see it; and we cannot see

<sup>1</sup> *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. 4., Ch. VII, Locke.

it save in the light of something more successful and effective.

#### SALVE FOR ACHILLES HEELS

When a man sets down his personal liabilities, what confronts him? A self-importance which values too highly his own opinions? or is he over-deferential, giving undue weight to the opinions of others? Why does he carry self-esteem to a fault, or make self-effacement an incubus? Does he worry to the point where he is ineffectual, ham-strung by indecision; or is he just blithely careless and indifferent to his errors? Does he elevate caution into irresolution, or is he so susceptible to suggestion and flattery that anyone can take him in? Does he trust no one, or everyone?

The list of personal liabilities might be extended interminably, but it will be more profitable to write one's own air and variations. The cadences need not be too much in a minor key, for we have it on good authority that

... best men are moulded out of faults.  
And, for the most, become much more the better  
For being a little bad.<sup>1</sup>

However Shakespeare may comfort our frailty, Freud will have none of it. He makes every error significant of some repressed wish. 'Jones left a letter for several days on his desk, forgetting each time to post it. He ultimately posted it, but it was returned to him from the Dead Letter Office because he forgot to address it. After addressing and posting it a second time, it was returned again to him, this time for a stamp. He was then forced to recognize the unconscious

<sup>1</sup> *Measure for Measure*, Act V, Sc. 1.

opposition to the sending of the letter.<sup>1</sup> We are prepared to discover that it was his Income-Tax Return.

This sort of thing does occur. We do occasionally forget to pay our bills because we secretly wish to avoid paying them at all. But how about forgetting to cash the cheques we receive? or leaving our treasured possessions lying about till they're stolen? We cannot, as Freud does, explain every error on this basis, but *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* makes most interesting reading, with some challenging (and challengeable) conclusions on the processes of forgetting, making mistakes, and deceiving ourselves in general.

This is as good a place as any other to explain just why I forbear to subject the reader, even by remote control, to the methods of psycho-analysis. First, we must somehow prevent the incontinent popping-up of the phallus, the œdipus complex, and the anal eroticism. The average man's ritual of errors is a good deal less obscene; more akin to Brahma's dream of home than to Freud's nightmare of Bedlam. On the Viennese view we are all sinners, but we need not be miserable sinners. Freud is altogether too knowledgeable, and as Somerset Maugham expresses it: 'Where the mystic sees the ineffable, the psycho-pathologist sees the unspeakable.'<sup>2</sup>

Apart from their inveterate tendency to reach hasty if brilliant conclusions, and their subordination of the rule to the exception, the psycho-analysts have traditionally been so preoccupied with the abnormal that the reader is forever after uncertain of his own sanity. Shut in to secret doubts and fears he tends to become like Mrs. Edward Craster's harried centipede, which

<sup>1</sup> *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, 'Combined Faulty Acts,' example (c).

<sup>2</sup> *The Moon and Sixpence*.

'... was happy quite  
Until a toad in fun  
Said "Pray, which leg goes after which?"  
That worked her mind to such a pitch  
She lay distracted in a ditch  
Considering how to run."<sup>1</sup>

Even apart from psycho-analytic dredging, there are few more harrowing tasks than setting out to gather a candid enumeration of one's faults. It is mortifying to discover how readily the friends of one's bosom will fall-to. Should they reveal a too avid taste for such vivisection, one can always offer to help them pluck the beam from their own eye. But the spectacle of anyone actually inviting analysis and criticism will always remain a rare phenomenon.

It is a humiliating experience to be reminded that one's conduct or course of action on such an occasion was childish, even when it was, and particularly when it was. Obvious though all this may be, there are few of us like Henry James's lady who at moments discovered she was grotesquely wrong and then would treat herself to a week of passionate humility. It is far more natural to dismiss introspection as unhealthy, bothersome, and so very un-English.

But if to one's career is to be added the time-honoured bread-sauce of a happy ending—with not too many garnishing regrets—self-analysis has its evident uses.

#### HOW DO WE LEARN?

'At thirty, a man suspects himself a fool; knows it  
at forty and reforms his plan;  
'At fifty chides his infamous delay, pushes his prudent purpose to resolve:

<sup>1</sup> *Pinafore Poems.*

'In all the magnanimity of thought, resolves and  
resolves;

'Then dies the same.<sup>1</sup>

EDWARD YOUNG<sup>1</sup>

The will, and not the deed, confounds us. We know so much better than we do. From childhood we are targeted with dissertations on delay, and the penalties on procrastination. Yet there seems to be a firm convention to be wise only after the event. Before we can discover how a man may learn from his mistakes it may be in order to inquire how he learns at all.

There are as many theories as to the nature of the learning process as devils on Luther's housetop, many of them as insubstantial. The problem gravely debated by them all is how a man can so change as to behave quite differently to-day from yesterday. It may surprise the reader to learn that there is in this any problem at all; but the schools have propounded three distinct theories to account for it. Thorndike's 'trial-and-error' method of learning by mistakes; the Gestalt emphasis upon the element of sudden 'insight'; and McDougall's view that learning involves 'foresight' as well as 'insight', may be taken together as explaining how we make up our minds. The personality grows and develops by all three processes.

There are four mental quirks that are costly in any language, and they are diagnosed thus by Professor Carrel: (1) Incomplete and superficial observation of the facts; (2) Confusion of cause and effect in the chain of circumstance; (3) A tendency to self-justification rather than self-criticism, and (4) lack of intellectual discipline.

<sup>1</sup> *Night Thoughts*, Night I.



*(1) Incomplete and superficial observation*

‘And quickly hied he down the stair;  
Of fifteen steps he made but three.’

The mind of the business man moves most confidentially, but for the most part he learns the game by assembling the facts, perceiving their all-over significance, and making his decision accordingly.

Henry Ford is famous as the man who has made many millions of motor-cars grow where only a few grew before. And his reading of the facts of the car industry and the transport field differed sharply from that of his rivals.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to that of almost everyone else, Ford’s analysis convinced him that the prosperity of the automobile industry could be built only on a foundation of high and ever-increasing wages. With the same markets, the same raw materials, the same labour and the same basic product, his observation of the facts was diametrically different from that of his fellow tycoons. This was partly because Ford’s personality is peculiar, but principally because he could learn by the mistakes of others. Where his fellow magnates could not rid their minds of the gospel of scarcity, he saw the necessity for plenty. Most of them have since come over to Ford’s basis of manufacture and marketing—the view that the only way to extend sales is to widen the market by raising the standard of life through higher incomes.

The point at issue is that one man could read the same set of facts in contrariety to others who were equally shrewd and ambitious, simply because his approach and his personality were fundamentally

<sup>1</sup> *My Life and Work*.

different. We are not concerned with the contingent fact that his system of repetitive labour has approximated his section of Detroit to the pattern of Plato's 'city of swine', with its material plenty and its robot sub-humans. That is beside the present point that Ford's phenomenal success accrued through his thorough-going analysis of mistakes. That he could be so ruthlessly efficient is due in no small part to the fact that he is temperamentally as cold and detached as one of his own gear-boxes. But the man could learn by the mistakes of others; he possessed insight; and from the pattern of to-day, his foresight showed him the plan for to-morrow.

The politician is no less subject to the tyranny of facts than the business man. As the apostle of the 'permanent revolution', Trotsky too took sharpest issue with his contemporaries in their reading of the political signs. Stalin also knew the facts intimately, but Trotsky repudiated Stalin's compromise and conciliation. The game of consequences is revealed starkly when we reflect that whereas Stalin is to-day one of the world's Big Three, Trotsky moulders in his casket with his skull smashed in by an ice-pick. He disbelieved that it was possible to establish socialism in a single country, and regarded Stalin as engaged in the sacrifice of the essential revolutionary ideal to considerations of domestic expediency, the validity of which Trotsky denied. Our grandchildren may be able to see who had the right of the matter. This at least is clear. Stalin saw certain things which escaped his rival; he was prepared to learn as he went; and to profit by his mistakes. The historic controversy is largely a play of human personality. As Harold Laski sums it up:

'Trotsky's greatest epoch was in the period of his partnership with Lenin; in those days, the strident ebullience of his temperament, its tendency to excess and over-rapid decision, were corrected by the massive solidity of Lenin's more comprehensive insight. Once Lenin had gone, circumstances made it inevitable that Trotsky should pay the price of a temperament that only a man like Lenin could have subdued to the discipline of co-operation. A force so gigantic as the Russian Revolution cannot be subordinated to the insight of one man.'<sup>1</sup>

It may be moving from the sublime to the ridiculous to return now to the mistakes of the ordinary man; more a trifling comedy of errors than a full-stage drama. The difference, however, is one of degree, not of kind. The ordinary citizen scamps the facts and reaches incomplete conclusions. Certain factors escape his careless scansion, and in most cases there is behind the mistake some defect of personality and its mental processes.

Some men learn like the rat in the puzzle-box; they perceive the separate facts but are not strong on insight. These must learn by trial and error. Others are like the racoon, which learns more quickly by picking up the pattern. Here there is a measure of insight. Others again learn as does the chimpanzee, picking things up in a few lessons and committing them to memory.

Faulty judgements in business cost us money; in social contacts, friends; in the home, happiness. Incomplete observation is a characteristic of the emotional and the imaginative temperament. It is often dangerous to elevate the process of feeling (the emotions) above that of thinking (rationality).

<sup>1</sup> *Great Contemporaries*, Essays by various hands.

(2) *Confusion of cause and effect*

‘Find out the cause of this effect,  
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,  
For this effect defective comes by cause.’

*Hamlet*, Act II, Sc. 2.

Our inveterate habit of jumping to conclusions is possibly a vestigial remnant of mankind's arboreal state. Samuel Butler gave it as his considered opinion that the art of life lies in drawing sufficient conclusions from insufficient premisses. Not a few of us invert the art.

From everyday logic it may be noted how much is made from so little by so many. Mr. A takes a dose of aspirin and the next day his cold is better. *Ipso facto* he was cured by the aspirin. Mr. S has written brilliant plays and is still vigorous in extreme old age. He is also a vegetarian. Therefore Mr. X concludes that genius and longevity are the product of vegetarianism. Children who attend the cinema excessively are found to have low scholastic records. Accordingly Mr. Y argues that too much movie-going causes low school attainment. During the Labour régime in New Zealand there has been greater prosperity in general than during most previous decades. Mr. Z therefore proclaims vociferously the supremacy of socialism. A strawberry grower uses electrified wires above his plants. The fruit is larger than usual and ripens sooner than last season. Consequently Mr. O is perfectly convinced that the improved condition of the berries is due to electrification.

Very little reflection is necessary to see that every one of these conclusions is presumptive. They may all be true judgements, but nobody knows on the evidence adduced. Each example is susceptible of alternative

explanation, and in some of them all human experience goes to show that the true cause is in fact quite other than the one presumed.

For instance, every medico knows that there is no 'cure' for the common cold; and any one of a dozen factors might have brought quick recovery. The aspirin may or may not have been one of the dozen. Shaw may well be what he is despite, rather than because of his lifelong aversion to meat-eating. There have been voracious flesh-eaters of equal brilliance and even greater age than Shaw. Children who live in cinemas do so because they have, as a rule, indifferent homes. It is from this root cause that come the limiting factors which are reflected both in addiction to films and in low school records. The Labour régime in New Zealand has, for half its term, been a war-time government, and there is no unemployment or depression or economic stalemate in time of war. In any case New Zealand's prosperity is attributable to other grounds than its internal politics. In respect to the superior strawberries, weather, the season, the scarecrow effect of the wires, soil-cycle—all of these may well be responsible for the bumper crop, to which warmth-culture may or may not have contributed.

These examples uncover another weakness of the hasty temperament. The personality dominated by emotional and sensory processes gravitates into these confusions unless there is caution and restraint. These are insufficient conclusions drawn from insufficient premisses.

What we do with our experience, what we learn from our mistakes, is more important than the mistakes themselves. When a man knows his own particular temperamental weaknesses he is at least forewarned, even if he cannot always be forearmed.

(3) *A tendency to self-justification rather than self-criticism*

‘Rule No. 6: Don’t take yourself so damn seriously.’

Allied Maritime Rules.

Few men can tolerate a wound to their *amour-propre*. Once we make a decision, adopt an opinion, or establish a policy, pride makes us loath to admit that we were wrong in so doing. We are more concerned to combat opposition or contrary opinion than to learn anything from it: more determined to justify ourselves than to discern any truth or sound sense on the other side. It is not that we make any conscious claim to inerrancy; it is rather that the average man cannot brook the thought of being proven wrong.

This psychological attitude is well described by J. M. Robinson: ‘If we are told that we are wrong, we resent the imputation and harden our hearts. We are incredibly heedless in the formation of our beliefs, but find ourselves filled with a passion for them when anyone proposes to controvert them. It is obviously not the ideas themselves that are dear to us, but our self-esteem which is threatened by the charge of error. Few of us bother to study the origins of our cherished convictions; indeed we have a natural repugnance to so doing. The result is that most of our so-called reasoning consists in finding arguments for going on believing as we already do, irrespective of the errors into which those beliefs have demonstrably trapped us.’<sup>1</sup>

These ludicrous psychological processes will be considered at length in a later chapter, for none of us are immune to them. The hackles of extroverts and introverts seem to rise equally in defence of their integrity. University professors can be just as testy in such matters as labour agitators.

<sup>1</sup> *Mind in the Making*.

One has but to listen to the New Zealand Parliamentary broadcasts during any sort of debate to note the sense of outrage at the mere suggestion that the honourable member might be wrong. It is, of course, a point of honour never to be wrong in politics, whether one is outside or inside the House. No one is prepared to be half right and Vice-President. Sit in on any conference of business executives and discover the same extraordinary collocation of sages. Each man, convinced of his own paramount worth, is as touchy as a time-bomb. Attend a conference of clergy and mark the almost universal perfectionism.

The central usefulness of self-criticism is to make superfluous the criticism of others. It is less a question of being virtuous than simply being prudent. Zeno first started the notion that knavery is the best defence against a knave, which is to say that self-criticism is the best way of confounding one's critics. The first serious business of the personality is to dispense with self-conceit, for it is impossible to learn what we think we already know. By appointing our own critic we pre-empt those who appoint themselves. This seems trite enough to be left unsaid, were it not for the universal instinct for self-justification.

The critics, worn out with half a century of attempts to suppress Shaw as a pestilent fellow, have had to desist with what grace they can command, for he has anticipated every stricture they might apply. He has said more vain things about himself than any other living man, yet he disarms any suggestion that he is a vain man. 'I am a natural born mountebank,' he says, yet demonstrates that he is the widest-ranging intellect of our day. He decks himself with cap and bells early in his career, but goes on to write the profoundest analyses of modern society. Shaw perfectly

exemplifies personality as a 'mask' drawn with the utmost calculation. He has never sought to justify himself, or others, when he or they the more needed criticism.

(4) *Lack of intellectual discipline*

'The gods approve the depth and not the tumult of the soul.'

SOCRATES

The fourth category of personality-defects productive of a lush crop of folly and failure is the undisciplined mind. So much brilliance expires like a dying catherine-wheel for lack of control and direction; so much high promise becomes desultory; and so many able men reach altogether incommensurate achievements, that prudence bids us carry introspection a stage further.

A man's personality may be either of two kinds—that into which he grows by intent, or that into which he drifts. It will possess elements of both, but too many of us accept the latter, thinking to have personality without achieving it. In this, as in everything else, we get what we pay for; and the price of a forceful, yet gracious and engaging personality is intellectual discipline. The Horatio Bottomleys of the world are compelling people, but they come to grief sooner or later through this default. This may well be another truism, though one would hardly think so, judging by contemporary emphases. Something for nothing and a great deal for a ha'penny is having an enormous vogue to-day. It is not only the shiftless who drift into the philosophy of 'the world owes me a living'. The economists have told us this so often that we easily interpret 'the right to work' as a right to



everything on a silver platter. Peter Drucker has offered some correctives to this confusion which is implicit in so many economic theories,<sup>1</sup> but there are still too many who believe that their failures are due to a gigantic conspiracy of wicked men.

The literature of 'success' is studded with potted wisdom; bijou beatitudes which suggest that there is a royal road to achievement. There is no such highway save that of intellectual discipline. This does not mean academic distinction, though university graduates are not more notably unsuccessful than less qualified men. It means that ability to control one's mental processes by which we achieve self-mastery as a preliminary to other kinds of mastery.

Once again upon a grand canvas, we may watch the working out of a personality possessed of everything save this crowning quality of character. If the play of human nature in such a man as John Wilkes seems remote from our more mundane problems, it can only be because we tend to overlook the common humanity of us all, great and small alike. Biographical study is never jejune. The aberrations of this personality touch our life to-day at a number of significant points.

Neither Krafft-Ebing nor Freud appear to have noticed this remarkable eighteenth-century exhibit, yet Wilkes lived like something out of Rabelais and died like something for Madame Tussaud's gallery. He was a good deal more than an exhibitionist of gigantic proportions. He was a politician who became a leader of a party in the Commons, a pamphleteer whose writing shook England, a pressman to be reckoned with, and a Lord Mayor of London the like of which even that great city seldom produces. Wilkes was more than an ugly pervert, though this he certainly was.

<sup>1</sup> *The End of Economic Man.*

He was cursed from birth by a monstrous ugliness; yet his personality was so powerful that throughout his life of animal promiscuity he claimed that it took him only half an hour to talk his face away. Given this start he would back himself for a lady's favours against the handsomest man in England. Hypersensuality is not unknown in the modern scene, as witness John Morris's anthropological study.<sup>1</sup> Where intellectual discipline is not forthcoming many a man will exhaust his vital powers in drunkenness and sexual licence. The eighteenth century was not unduly moral nor restrained, so that Wilkes was probably no worse than his period. The compensation of physical ugliness by sexual conquests is a common enough psychological process. What is significant about the career of Wilkes is that for lack of discipline a powerful national leader was lost. The whole story is told by Olga Venn and will repay careful reading.<sup>2</sup>

Among his rakehell friends was another character portraying the same undiscipline; one Thomas Potter, scapegrace son of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Together they joined the notorious company of the 'Monks of St. Francis', better known as the Hellfire Club. Miss Venn's description of this libidinous crew can hardly be improved upon: 'The dozen hardened profligates composing this order, among them the half-witted Lord Orford, the brutal Sandwich and that Lord March who was to ogle his senile way to perdition as the infamous "Old Q", used to meet at Medmenham Abbey for their orgies. There they tumbled, their mistresses and possibly dabbled in the few remaining vices.'

Why resurrect so unsavoury a character? Merely to

<sup>1</sup> *Living with Lepchas.*

<sup>2</sup> *English Wits*, p. 93 et seq.

limn the consequences even to the most powerful type of personality, when there is no discipline of mind or habit. The nub of the matter is that Wilkes had it in him to be something quite other than his undiscipline made him. He took the side of the people against Bute and the King, and was credited with driving the Prime Minister out of office. Arrested for sedition and sent to the Tower, he won his appeal for wrongful arrest. He so challenged the Secretaries of State that the infamous system of arrest by general warrant was, to the relief of common justice, discontinued in England. Expelled from the Commons he was championed by the great Chatham and by Junius, to re-enter Parliament as a party leader. Lord Mansfield declared him to be 'The pleasantest companion, the politest gentleman, and the best scholar I ever knew.' Lesser men have ruled England. No man of his time was more the idol of the people; no leader more feared by corruption in high places.

But history knows him more as a pathological curiosity. In prison he received his mistresses at ease, and when restored to power as Lord Mayor of London, he squandered himself upon every town drab with a pretty face. One need not be a moralist to deplore this wasting of a personality which could have been Prime Minister. Whatever cards heredity had dealt him, there were too many knaves in his pack. Kings and Queens he might trump, but the ace which was himself he never learned to play aright.

All that it is necessary to say is that had he possessed this capacity for intellectual and emotional discipline, Wilkes might have been much more than a grotesque gargoyle upon the edifice of the national life. That he had it in him is shown by his periodic bursts of

tremendous application and energy. But he chose to drift into irresponsibility. His whole life was an indiscriminate and unequal flirtation with virtue and with vice. Those there are who diagnose our times in similar terms.

#### SUMMARY

We have been considering four mental failings whose mistakes are costly to the personality. Their out-working in character shows that they can be corrected. From Cicero to Dr. Smiles there has been unanimity on the value of lessons learned from such mistakes. The Roman philosopher said: 'Any man may commit a mistake, but none but a fool will continue in it.' The apostle of self-help wrote: 'He who never made a mistake, never made a discovery.'

It is not necessary to ignore all that has gone before us, doggedly running the full gamut of our own errors, whether they be in breaches of the moral law, underpaying our employees, careless driving, drinking to excess or evading income-tax. These are mistakes whether we are found out in them or not. They are errors of judgement because they are costly to the personality, particularly when they are *not* found out. For then we become successful sinners. In that case we are little wiser than Kohler's apes, incorrigibly committed to learning the laborious way.

As Dr. R. B. Cattell writes: 'Most forms of error are in a sense a form of insincerity.'<sup>1</sup> The old prayer for 'truth in the inward parts' is firm-based upon a universal need of the personality. With King Lear we might well consent: 'O, I have Ta'en too little care of this!'

<sup>1</sup> *Crooked Personalities.*

## THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The thirty questions at the beginning of this chapter are framed to elucidate your attitudes and your capacity to learn by your mistakes.

The following answer-key would indicate a developed judgement and a lively sense of values:

*Answer-key*

Question 1: yes	Question 11: yes	Question 21: yes
2: no	12: no	22: yes
3: yes	13: yes	23: no
4: no	14: yes	24: yes
5: yes	15: yes	25: yes
6: yes	16: no	26: yes
7: no	17: no	27: yes
8: yes	18: no	28: yes
9: yes	19: yes	29: yes
10: no	20: yes	30: yes

The questions have been arranged under the following heads, so that the reader may further identify any blind-spots in his personality:

Mental characteristics:	Questions 2, 10, 13, 17, 20 and 29
Dispositional	„ „ 3, 8, 11, 12, 16 and 26
Commercial	„ „ 5, 14, 19, 23, 24 and 25
Social	„ „ 6, 7, 9, 21, 27 and 28
Emotional	„ „ 1, 4, 15, 18, 22 and 30

## INTERPRETING YOUR RESULTS

If you have been able to confess to certain faults, this in itself is a hopeful sign of capacity for improvement. If you reveal yourself to be a paragon and unimprovable product you have at least discovered an overweening conceit. The crux of this chapter is that

what we do with our experience, what we learn from our mistakes, is more important than the mistakes themselves.

Such defects as you can prove against yourself need not discourage you. Among your acquaintances there will be persons who have unusual ability and attainments, who are yet lonely and disappointed. There will be others whose financial security you may well envy, but whose lot you would not accept for a King's ransom. No ideal is here posed save your own, to which you can the more quickly gravitate by avoiding such faults as you have uncovered.

Self-importance and self-pity are the sins. Both are immature, self-frustrating attitudes. He who is insulated in self-conceit, who has lost the divine discontent which makes, Charles Kingsley said, 'the very germ of every virtue'—will write all this off as mid-Victorian uplift.

As to blind-spots: a learned philosopher who was once asked what he thought of music, replied that he didn't mind it. Which goes to show that there are spots even on the sun.

'Not failure, but low aim, is crime.'

J. R. LOWELL

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER V

#### I

1. *Do you enjoy acting a part when among strangers?* .....
2. *Do you feel inferior to most of your associates?* .....
3. *Have you ever been discharged for incompetence?* .....
4. *Are you subject to reproachful, introspective moods?* .....
5. *Are you suspicious of the motives of others?* .....
6. *Do you enjoy the 'near-the-knuckle' raconteur?* .....
7. *Are you often conscious of pretending to be other than your true self?* .....
8. *Are you dogged by disappointment with life and your achievements?* .....
9. *Have you a violent and frequent temper?* .....
10. *Does it humiliate you to have to serve in a minor capacity?* .....
11. *Do you feel satisfaction in witnessing accidents, or pain or punishment?* .....
12. *Do you suffer from insomnia not merely physical in origin? i.e. from mental unrest?* .....

13. *Do you crave inordinately for excitement and romance?* .....
14. *Do you suffer from spells of black depression?* .....
15. *In answering these questionnaires are you aware of a desire to conceal unpleasant factors in yourself?* .....
16. *Are you inclined to be a dreamer?* .....
17. *Have you often claimed to possess qualifications that you do not possess in fact?* .....
18. *Are you inclined to be highly imaginative?* .....
19. *Are you of a deeply religious nature?* .....
20. *In answering the questionnaire for the chapter on 'The Maturing Personality' did you score somewhat poorly in respect to a mature and balanced outlook?* .....

## II

1. *Are you conscious of personal development over the last few years in your disposition to sympathy with and understanding of others?* (A) definitely (B) I think so (C) no
2. *Under personal criticism do you tend to be (A) silent; (B) soft-spoken, or (C) outspoken?* (A) (B) (C)
3. *Do you consider that among your associates you are (A) popular; (B) respected rather than liked, or (C) just accepted?* (A) (B) (C)
4. *Do you occupy any honorary elective positions?* (A) yes (B) no



5. *In making personal purchases, are you difficult to please?* (A) yes  
(B) somewhat  
(C) no
6. *Would your six best friends consider you to be vacillating in character?* (A) no  
(B) a few might  
(C) yes
7. *Do you regularly attend any cultural groups?* (A) yes  
(B) occasionally  
(C) no
8. *Among your close friends can you number any acknowledged leaders in their professions?* (A) a number  
(B) one or two  
(C) no
9. *Do you enjoy historical and biographical films? (Citizen Kane, The First of the Few, Louis Pasteur, Emile Zola, Rhodes of Africa, The Young Mr. Pitt, Colonel Blimp, This Happy Breed, Henry V, etc.)* (A) yes  
(B) occasionally  
(C) no
10. *How many books of a serious nature have you read this year? i.e. books on economic, social, political, religious, or educational subjects?* (A) 6 or more  
(B) a few  
(C) none
11. *Is your conversation often on abstract ideas? i.e. dealing with principles and ideals of life?* (A) yes  
(B) occasionally  
(C) no
12. *Do you often analyse public personalities, and discuss their character, motives, capacities, etc.* (A) yes  
(B) sometimes  
(C) no
13. *Are you free of any great tendency to look back on early-life conditions, and dwell on the past?* (A) yes  
(B) not always  
(C) no

14. *Have you developed any new hobby or leisure interest of recent years?* (A) yes  
(B) I think so  
(C) no
15. *Are you actively associated with any movement or organization seeking specific reforms?* (A) yes  
(B) sometimes  
(C) no
16. *Are you known as 'radical' or 'un-orthodox' in any respects?* (A) yes  
(B) sometimes  
(C) never
17. *Have you undertaken any serious study of recent years?* (A) consistently  
(B) spasmodically  
(C) no
18. *Do you maintain an active interest in scientific development and social progress?* (A) consistently  
(B) spasmodically  
(C) no
19. *Do you readily accept difficult assignments and tasks you've never essayed before?* (A) yes  
(B) reluctantly  
(C) not at all
20. *Are you in the habit of following some form of practical physical work apart from your livelihood? i.e some leisure activity apart from reading and indoor games?* (A) yes  
(B) sometimes  
(C) don't know what you mean

## CHAPTER V

### THE DIVIDED PERSONALITY

'Are you the person drawn toward me?  
To begin with, take warning, I am surely far different  
from what you suppose;  
Do you suppose you will find in me your ideal?  
Do you think it so easy to have me become your lover?  
Do you think the friendship of me would be unalloy'd  
satisfaction?  
Do you think I am trusty and faithful?  
Do you see no further than this façade, this smooth  
and tolerant manner of me?  
Do you suppose yourself advancing on real ground  
toward a real heroic man?  
Have you no thought, O dreamer, that it may be all  
maya, illusion?'

WALT WHITMAN

WHITMAN'S lines are the apologia of the divided personality. There is here all the uncertainty, the irresolution and the pessimism of a house divided against itself.

In Oliver Wendell Holmes's familiar triumvirate every man is three persons: (1) the man that I think I am, a picture apt to be somewhat flattering to the subject; (2) the man that others think I am, which is apt to be his personality rather than his character; and (3) the man that I really am, something of an enigma even to myself.

Alphonse Karr expresses the same idea when he says that every man has three characters: that which he exhibits; that which he has; and that which he thinks he has. Because in all of us there are these three persons to be reckoned with, self-analysis can be most confusing.

A policeman may be ruthless on the beat and the soul of tenderness in his home. A father may be strict with his employees and fondly indulgent with his sons. A woman may be full of good works yet merciless in her gossip. In these cases, however, there is no serious inconsistency. It is not difficult to harmonize in any one person a sternness and a tenderness, a strictness and an indulgence. We should be less than normal did we not manifest these opposing facets of character at some time or another. This is the natural expression of imperfect human nature.

But there are other cases where any such reconciliation cannot be effected. The personality is not complementary in its variety; it is not a unity at all. The company promoter who falsifies a prospectus, waters stocks, and generally follows sharp practice; while at the same time he poses a model standard of ethics to the outside world and to his family—this man is a divided personality. He is destined for a disruption of character which may register itself in a nervous breakdown or a prison sentence.

Or his duplicity may reveal itself as Lord Middlehurst was betrayed—in an unguarded moment. 'He did not speak again till just before he died, when he kissed his wife's hand with a singular tenderness, and called her Elizabeth. She had been christened Augusta Frederica, but then, as the doctors explained, dying men often make these mistakes.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Have you anything to Declare?* by Maurice Baring.

## THE DISSOCIATION OF PERSONALITY

In pathological cases, this division of the personality becomes complete dissociation. Students will be familiar with the standard examples of this psychological phenomenon. There is the case of one 'split' personality; a young woman who appears to have been a whole legion in herself, as diverse as the Vitamin-B complex. Some six or seven personalities seem to have shared her long-suffering body, even to the extent of bathing it doggedly seven times over.<sup>1</sup> Here surely is the ultimate in personality disbalance.

Stevenson's febrile story is authentic because he portrays a human consciousness in a divided personality.<sup>2</sup> It came to him in a single dream. When he awoke, the character was still vividly with him and he wrote it down at white heat. The essential significance of Dr. Jekyll is that he was a unity. Hyde was but the evil diversity in that unity.

There is nothing unfamiliar about this concept of the divided personality. The whole of life authenticates its psychological soundness. In one of Macaulay's essays appear three classic examples of the fundamental contradiction of human personality.

'Seneca declaimed in praise of poverty with two million sterling out at usury; meditated about the evils of luxury in gardens which moved the envy of sovereigns; ranted about liberty while fawning on the insolent and pampered freedman of a tyrant; and celebrated the divine beauty of virtue with the same pen which had just before written the defence of the murder of a mother by a son.

'The difference between the soaring angel and the

<sup>1</sup> *The Dissociation of Personality*, Dr. Morton Prince.

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

creeping snake was but a type of the difference between Bacon the Philosopher and Bacon the Attorney-General; Bacon seeking for truth and Bacon seeking for the seals. Those who survey only one half of his character may speak of him with unmixed admiration, or with unmixed contempt.'

'The whole man (Machiavelli) seems to be an enigma, a grotesque assemblage of incongruous qualities—selfishness and generosity, cruelty and benevolence, craft and simplicity, abject villainy and romantic heroism.'

These three men were not unlike so many normal people—divided personalities who knew all the time what they were doing. They were not dissociated personalities like Morton Prince's distracted lady who never knew from one day to another who she was or what she did yesterday.

This fact emerges when we examine the character of any one of them more closely. Since so much has been elucidated in the life of Bacon it will not be amiss to sheet home his contrariety.

#### BACON AND SHAKESPEARE AGAIN

The Baconian theory as firmly held 'by officers in the Navy and the Army, by one of His Majesty's judges, and the manager of more than one large drapery establishment, is corroborated by several thoughtful baronets'. Their argument is a question: How can Shakespeare have been two men in one? On the one hand there was the Elizabethan Barnum, who, as James Agate shows,<sup>1</sup> ran a playhouse and raked in the pennies, had no artistic conscience, was the greatest pot-boiler the world has known, cared so little for his plays that he completely ignored the quartos printed in his lifetime,

<sup>1</sup> *Thursdays and Fridays*, p. 37.

gifts not merely to friends, but to retainers and the poor, and to public institutions. Yet when his assets were realized, the amount was only sufficient to defray two-thirds of his debts and not a single bequest.

And Bacon was not only venal. His betrayal of Essex every schoolboy knows and scorns. His sycophancy to James I was that craven search for the seals which provoked Macaulay to the metaphor of the crawling snake. It is not necessary to canvass the other side to Bacon; it has been done in high voice again and again. He had a great mind and a petty conniving character, not the first nor the last we shall see of this kidney.

The dilemma is scarcely disposed of by those who find the substantive Shakespeare in Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford. Not even the skilfully enciphered authorship of *Hasta Vibrans* can obscure the fact that little less contradiction reposes in his personality. Lord Oxford had the temperament of genius—passionate, emotionally unbalanced, avid of worldly pleasure, sensuous and proud. Oxford burnt himself out in the prodigal indulgence of his gifts, and at the last, died in obscurity. Oxford may be a more credible genius than the erstwhile horse-holder, but the matter cannot be resolved on any consistency between his character and that of the sublime dramas.

Someone has said that man is not a single uncomplicated personality so much as a Trojan horse filled with men. The analogy is sound, for they all have weapons in their hands. We are not one character but many, and whether we make these various selves into allies or adversaries depends upon the degree of integration we can achieve within the personality. The unreliable, the unpredictable and the vacillating character has simply not found inner unity. He may in

consequence be either criminal or merely crass. But here is the diagnosis—divided personality.

## RAMSAY MACDONALD

The complexity of a famous contemporary personality has been portrayed by two books, the one by Lord Elton,<sup>1</sup> and the other by L. MacNeill Weir.<sup>2</sup> The Socialist Prime Minister lived to be repudiated—nay execrated—by the party he did so much to create. It was inevitable that both sides should be presented sooner or later.

His unusual character can only be understood in a full-length biography, but the relevant psychological factors can be summarized thus. MacDonald was a divided personality of more than ordinary contradiction because of many things which go far to explain what was later held against him with needless rancour. His story is the romance of a child born in poverty of an unmarried mother, who by his own unaided efforts fought his way from the lowest step to the highest. He himself was the first to acknowledge the assistance of his wife, whose gracious influence is preserved in one of the finest tributes ever paid by a man to his helpmeet.<sup>3</sup>

His education at a Kirk school for eightpence a month could scarcely explain the fact that he was his party's chief intellectual asset, his nearest rival in this respect being Snowden. He had ample physical courage, and of his moral strength there can be no question. His decision in 1914, that he would fight for Britain if Britain were in danger, but not in a French war or a Russian war may have been muddled but it was most

<sup>1</sup> *Life of James Ramsay MacDonald.*

<sup>2</sup> *Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald.*

<sup>3</sup> *Margaret Ethel MacDonald.*



courageous. It severed him from the bulk of his party and made him a pariah in the country.

What of the other side to the man? He was never an easy man to know, and in later years, loneliness and numerous hostilities drove him in on himself. Those with a taste for the present-day literature of detraction will doubtless have read the account by Mr. Weir. This gentleman, nursed in the MacDonald bosom as his Parliamentary Private Secretary, took an unconscionable time to discover his conscience. He describes his old chief as self-seeking, unprincipled, disloyal, a careerist, a rhetorician, and an inveterate calculator of the main chance. As Wilson Harris has answered: 'On his own showing, Mr. Weir's seven-year association with a leader whose every word and act appears to have been a perpetual laceration of his own high-mindedness, is either an extraordinary devotion or a contemptible time-serving.'<sup>1</sup> Weir's book leaves no doubt on the point.

The truth as between these two opposite accounts of a distinguished personality is, of course, that MacDonald's faults were many and obvious. He was vain and touchy; and he took his place with rather too patent satisfaction in a social milieu very different from that of his socialist colleagues. A good deal of the criticism levelled against him reeks of party choler. He came near to greatness, and served his party and his country as no other of his colleagues could have done at the time.

#### THE MASK WE CALL THE 'PERSONA'

To understand these complexities of human nature it is now necessary to review the manner in which they develop. 'The occasion produces the man'—and all

<sup>1</sup> 99 *Gower Street*.

these individuals, Seneca, Bacon, Machiavelli, Shakespeare, MacDonald—partook of their period. All men grow up and into a personality affected at all points by their environment.

As a baby, the individual is not really a personality at all, but just a bundle of sensory organs. As he learns to differentiate these sense-impressions which bombard him from left, right and centre, he builds up a pattern of behaviour by trial and error. His nascent character is thus being conditioned by and accommodated to his environment. Such dispositions as are innate are either developed by social approval or driven underground by social penalties. The earliest society the child knows and must assimilate to is the family. That is why childhood experiences are so formative. As he enters the school and later the workaday world, the child and the youth is forever unconsciously selecting and discarding as between the socially-approved and the socially reprovved qualities in his character.

By the time he reaches maturity, his personality has emerged as an amalgam or a precipitate of these selected characteristics. This is the 'mask' which we have already seen to be the true nature of personality.

The reader need not therefore conclude that he is a merely mechanical product of stimulus and response, a little conditioned robot who grew up without having a hand in things. On the contrary, throughout the process, self-will plays its part. But in any evaluation of personality, due regard must be paid to those individual factors which also played a part in shaping it, factors of inheritance and environment as well as those of personal choice and willed selection.

The divided personality is thus one in which the contending factors of the formative years have never been fully resolved; or it may be one in which either

body or mind or both have become affected and thrown out of balance. Thus are battles lost within the Self. There is a divided instead of a unified command. The will vacillates—and then comes down solidly on *both* sides. On the other hand, the unified personality has contrived a balance as between its warring instincts and tendencies. Society has successfully moulded and the man himself has successfully fused all the disparate elements that go to make his character. There will be variations and lapses, but in the main he has reached a practical working arrangement with his community. He is in equilibrium with his environment. Having learned painfully what is socially acceptable, he presents to the world only those facets of himself which he knows will excite no adverse effects. The rest he keeps to himself. If these inner characteristics are satisfactorily held in check, then this man's course in life will be reasonably calm. If on the other hand, his Trojan horsemen break out on him now and again, and the offence to conventional society be too serious, he assumes the Jekyll-Hyde existence. If he happens to be any sort of a public figure he will be pelted as were MacDonald and the rest.

#### THE ESCAPE MECHANISM

On one occasion during the early Pacific campaign it was my responsibility to defend an airman who was being court-martialled for refusing duty. For such a charge there is no defence. Air Force law is inflexible on that. The best that can be done is to plead guilty and enter as sound a plea as possible in mitigation of punishment. This lad's background was interesting. An only child of a neurotic mother, all his life he had been a centre of ailments, real and imaginary. When, as an escape from unpleasant duty, he unconsciously

took refuge in an old bodily weakness, he was falling back into the routine that had been established from childhood. The doctors had no alternative but to pronounce him fit in body for duty, but the defence called a psychiatrist from the neighbouring American hospital to explain to the Court the peculiar nature of a divided personality. This youth had never reached an equilibrium with his environment—probably never will.

Irreconcilables like Bernard Shaw see in war only the abnegation of all virtue and nobility of character. 'Military service,' he writes, 'produces moral imbecility, ferocity and cowardice. There is only one virtue, pugnacity; only one vice, pacifism.'<sup>1</sup>

But Shaw is betrayed by his vehemence. As Ovid put it in the long ago: 'War suckles a spirit superior to every weapon.' This is not true of all men, and certainly not true of the few weaklings who unhappily are drafted from time to time. But the stern compulsion of military service does inculcate qualities that can transform a man's whole character. For every one who fails of his duty through a divided personality, there are a hundred who reach the necessary equilibrium.

#### THE 'MASK' OF THE HYPOCRITE

It has been argued that the *persona* is the mask a man assumes in his society; that part of him which he presents to others. It has been said that there are a number of persons in each of us, some of whom we keep in the room upstairs like a mysterious lodger or downstairs in the cellar like a veritable Hyde. It has been demonstrated how the man tends to show to others only that 'front' which he thinks has social approval.

<sup>1</sup> *John Bull's Other Island*: Preface; and *Heartbreak House*: Preface.

Does this reduce personality to the mask of the hypocrite and the humbug?

McDougall has stated the answer with the utmost clarity. 'The hypocrite desires to appear to have virtue or some particular fine quality: the man who pursues the ideal, desires to possess the quality, to make it his own, to incorporate it in his character. The hypocrite cares nothing for the possession of the quality, so long as he is regarded by others as possessing it; in fact he would not accept it, if it were offered him as a gift from heaven; for the possession of it would hamper him in the pursuit of his goals. The man of fine character cares little or nothing that others should recognize in him the qualities he values.'<sup>1</sup>

In other words, the *persona* of the normal individual is his tribute to an ideal which he sees and strives after. He suppresses part of himself not to deceive but to achieve.

How then can a man be sure that he does not wear the mask of the hypocrite? Honest self-appraisal can supply the answer. The desire for praise will come before the desire to be praiseworthy—that is the normal sequence of development from the child to the man. This is society's function as mentor of the individual—to teach what is desirable so that in time it may become desired. It is during this indeterminate stage of youth, before character has crystallized, and while he is still doing certain things and being a certain type of person simply because it pays to be so, that the distinction between hypocrisy and the pursuit of the ideal is difficult.

But if in the *man* there has been no passing from the seeming to the sincere, his will be a false front—the confusion of the divided personality. There will be

<sup>1</sup> *Character and the Conduct of Life*, p. 134.

a gulf as between the man others think he is, and the man he really is. If on the other hand our hypothetical youth arrives naturally at the point where the things he professes are becoming the virtues he possesses, he has put aside the temporary mask of appearances and has developed a valid personality.

He will always carry in the luggage of life, certain undesirable characteristics, but these are by now clearly marked 'not wanted on the voyage'. Not till we are numbered among the spirits of just men made perfect will we be entirely innocent of artifice and dissimulation. We can, however, strike a working balance in these things. And solvency is entirely a matter of temperament and character, not of income.

In our pilgrimage, not uncommonly

'Across the fields of yesterday  
He sometimes comes to me,  
A little lad just back from play—  
The lad I used to be.  
I wonder if he hopes to see  
The man I might have been.'<sup>1</sup>

Because every man of us has his own inner conflicts, we shall now consider this trio of persons resident in each of us: the man I think I am; the man that others think I am; and finally, the man I really am. We are now prepared to find certain differences between them without concluding that men are therefore pious frauds and their friends poor dupes.

(1) *The Man I think I am*

'In nature's infinite book of secrecy  
A little I can read.'

*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I, Sc. 2.

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, T. S. Jones.

In youth we all hold views of our powers which later experience shows to be if not derisory, then at least over-sanguine. In maturity we are somewhat cut down in size. Higher education, our occupation and adult experience have modified our earlier ideas. Possibly the reverse may be the case. Those early notions of our capacity may have been but faint adumbrations of the actuality to-day. We may have succeeded beyond our dreams.

So this first 'I'—the man I think I am—may be either smaller or larger than our early expectations.

Fortunately, only the past is irrevocable. Whatever may be the present limiting factors in and around a man, he has surely the capacity to surprise himself by becoming the man he thinks he is. But whether he be better or worse for life's mauling so far, a too-high opinion of himself is fatal. Let a man circumvent illusion here lest it be said of him as it was of Themistocles: 'We think that his too great opinion of himself was the chief cause of his disaster.' On the other side, a man can take altogether too poor a view of himself. Chinese students almost invariably under-rate themselves, an interesting reflection of their national character. It is not necessary to lean over backwards in this direction. As it runs in Henry V: 'Self-love, my liege, is not so vile a sin as self-neglecting.'

There is a third contingency: a man may dismiss introspection and self-appraisal as finicky and futile. In an interview in 1930 Professor Einstein expressed this point of view when he said: 'I never think of the future. It comes soon enough.' That ordinarily sagacious savant there indulged a solecism. The future has indeed come to him and to his sorrowful race. Perhaps he reflects to-day that to-morrow always comes, whether we go out to meet it or not.

If there is one shining daystar in the present benighted world-situation, it is that the future lies not in the hands of Caesar's swelling ambition, but with the common man. From a distance, Fate looks large and forbidding: but when he looms up we see that he is our Self. Maeterlinck has a line which runs: 'The future is a world limited by ourselves; in it we discover only what concerns us, and sometimes by chance, what interests those whom we love.'<sup>1</sup>

In such a world the man I think I am has his part to play.

(2) *The Man that others think I am*

'Men should be what they seem.'

*Othello*, Act III, Sc. 3.

We are agreed. We have ourselves to thank if, being taken on face value, the price is cheap. The opinion others hold of us is what we allow them to think. Yet, oddly enough, men are seldom as good or as bad as they are thought by others to be.

If, then, you are misunderstood, it is not because others head a conspiracy, but because you yourself head a mystery. The opinions of others as to yourself need not murder sleep. Those orientals who felt various parts of an elephant in a dark cavern and then essayed a description, were in no better part than your associates who endeavour to assess the whole on the little they know of you. Let a man be reconciled to himself as a curious and piebald miscellany, and he will not look for the judgements of God in the opinions of men.

It is interesting to ask how others do in fact judge us. Do they form their opinion on our voice? Disraeli used to insist that there is no index of character so sure

<sup>1</sup> *Joyzelle*.



as this. It was a reasonable clue to Hitler's megalomania. But who would have the temerity to character-analyse those sonorous baritones of the B.B.C. from their disembodied personality as revealed in the fat-stock reports?

If behind all the wooden voices we hear, there really were wooden minds, the prospect would be unendurable. And what of those little linnets of the telephone exchange who are like the Laconian nightingale—all voice and nothing else? Who would venture to draw a personality profile from those carefully edited accents?

Or are we assessed by our dress? If we were all mere Adam's children, with dress the only difference and an infallible guide to character, then to command a tailor would be to command a personality. From the advertisements of tailoring emporiums we might conclude that here indeed is the basic clue to the real and inner man. It is true that not everyone can afford to wear a shabby suit. But would even our detractors claim that our clothes are our table of contents? Surely no one will judge our character by so meretricious an art as that of dress.

Some there are who affect to be able to judge their fellows by the mysterious canons of phrenology. But when a cretin can have a brain as heavy and a cranium as large as Napoleon's, this business of circuits and bumps charts nothing of necessary significance. Is physiognomy in any better plight? 'There's no art to find the mind's construction in the face.' True, our faces may sadden the observer, but in fairness to us it must be a cosmic, not a personal reproach. One may in truth read a good deal between the lines of a face, for it mirrors both passing emotion and permanent disposition. Nevertheless there are millions of earnest

poker-players who are not to be read so superficially. In any case, a brooding melancholy may be merely flatulence; a joyous benignity only mellow inebriation. Most of us would hold that a man's face is a convenience rather than a confession.

No, these are but the observable accidents of personality, not its essence.

Where, then, does the individual find the man others think he is? There are few things as revealing as our conversation, for therein of a surety speaks character. When Joseph Addison was quizzed by a lady for taking no part in the conversation, he replied: 'Madam, I have but ninepence in ready cash at the moment, but I can draw for a thousand pounds when I wish.' In a thousand unsuspected ways we reveal ourselves to the observant listener. Some wiseacre will protest that 'what we are shouts so loudly that it drowns out what we say'. But that is serene nonsense, for nine-tenths of ourself is communicated by what we say.

Who reveals more of himself than the valetudinarian? Who conceals himself as effectively as the man who sits and says nothing? Ben Jonson used to say: 'Speak that I may see thee.' There is no surer way to determine whether a fellow is the full twenty shillings. And our silences are almost as significant as our speech. There are reticent races as well as taciturn individuals, and in forming any opinion of others we must take account of racial as well as personal characteristics. We do not expect the same volubility from the Celt as gushes from Gallic and Latin peoples. Again within any given community there are certain callings in which a man tends to assume their special character. The banker will be more reserved than the politician; the salesman will be more loquacious than the solicitor.

Finally, a man's actions will certainly qualify his

speech and his silence. Happy is he whose precept and practice go along like a pair-in-hand. He need not be exercised about the man that others think he is, for there is here no divided personality.

(3) *The Man I really am*

‘All things except myself I know.’

UNKNOWN

‘Just stand aside and watch yourself go by,  
Think of yourself as “he” instead of “I”.’

STRICKLAND GILLILAN

Introspection cannot uncover this third ‘I’. This inner citadel of the Self must be stormed and taken by other means. Its dungeons (the unconscious) may sometimes be entered by stealth through the techniques of psycho-analysis. But a half-crown dream-book will scarcely suffice. Auto-suggestion, hypnotism, and psychiatry are clinical procedures more applicable to the sick than the sound mind. Freud’s interpretation of dreams is an endeavour to catch the secret Self off its guard, and to take the keys from his girdle. His followers do learn a great deal by this method, even though it turns out to be no more than the sort of knowledge that doctors acquire of their patients.

What methods are available for the ordinary person who desires a knowledge of this third ‘I’?—the man I really am—but without putting a spade into the unconscious?

First it can be suggested that the real man is often a composite picture of the other two, rather more than less. This third and inner Self is not a static entity, with so many definite attributes that can be tabulated by analysis. It is a stream of consciousness without

habits or features or a body of anything. What we are, and what others think we are have a direct bearing upon the third Self, because as McDougall says: 'Modification of existing tendencies is the essence of intelligent activity.'

The last ignobility of the modern mind is that corroding cynicism which denies the possibility of improvement in anything. Unworthiness is condoned in a fine scorn for objective standards. The grafter assures himself and anyone else who will listen, that every man has his price: and so the black markets flourished while lives were blotted out in the holocaust. These illicit dealings were supported by people decent enough to know better but selfish enough to be indifferent. Should a political leader be charged with insincerity, as many of them well might; if the cry goes up that government is inept because incapables are put in office for party and personal reasons, there are always too many people who will say: 'What do you expect? That's human nature.'

If this be a fair view of men in the mass it is surely not true of those same men individually. Are we left with no other conclusion than that man is just an irrational animal who differs from his 'lower' prototypes only in that he eats when he is not hungry, drinks when he is not thirsty, and makes love at all times?

This mechanistic view of man comes along periodically with the wars that foster it. How old it is no one knows. But as long ago as Plato we were offered the definition that 'man is an animal, biped and featherless'. By way of rejoinder, Diogenes plucked a fowl and brought it to the lecture-room with the words: 'Here is Plato's man.' In consequence of which there was added to the definition the codicil '. . . having broad nails'. We do not appear to have added much

of consequence since then, if this cynical and mechanistic view of man be still tenable.

The man that I really am cannot be measured by yard-sticks or balances or decibel-count or galvanometers. He makes himself known by the ideals he sets before the other two men. Unless he can find something worth living for they will never approximate to it. It is he only who experiences 'the divine discontent' with things as they are. It is he of whom Gordon Graham speaks in his diagnosis: 'There are two kinds of discontent: the kind that works and the kind that wrings its hands. The first gets what it wants, and the second loses what it had. There is no cure for the first but success, and there is no cure at all for the second.'

This is sage counsel for the divided personality.

#### SUMMARY

Accepting the triplication of the Self as a useful gambit, we have considered the problem of divided personality as one wherein exists no unity or integrity.

When pressed into abnormality this becomes dissociated personality, in which the problem is not so much disharmony as disruption within the self.

Within the normal personality, however, may be discerned certain contrarities which must be understood as natural. This admixture of opposites is reflected in all the conscious processes: thinking, feeling, and acting. The task of the personality is to achieve a balance and equilibrium with its community in general and its own complex Self in particular.

It has been held that this is Man: neither angel nor devil, but a tendentious stream of consciousness with the capabilities of both but the character of neither. The outward personality may affect what the inner Self

admires and to which it aspires. Or it may wear merely the mask of hypocrisy; which conspires but neither admires nor aspires.

Cradled with certain dispositions, nurtured into a certain character, and patterned into an approved way of life, the personality is complicated by a multiplicity of faces. The extent to which these varying aspects of the Self co-ordinate and integrate is the degree of health and unity it possesses.

The man that I think I am is only a partial picture of the real Self because of my own blind-spots. The man that others think I am is also a partial picture, because the man that I really am—much of him buried in the unconscious—cannot be known in full either to me or to others.

But my outward personality is judged by its unity—or lack of it; by its balance with the community and within itself. Disharmony between the seeming Self and the real Self can be annulled only by the pursuit of an ideal and by the process of achievement.

## THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### PART I

If the reader has turned in more than twelve 'Yes' answers to Part I of the Questionnaire for this chapter, there's a strong suggestion of more than average confusion and disbalance in his personality. It is well to bear in mind that the differences between men in this respect are of degree and not of kind. We are all of us out of suit with fortune, more or less. It is the 'more' that is unfortunate for our peace of mind.

If you show from eight to twelve affirmatives, you may consider yourself no more than normally complex and divided in character. 'Men are but men; the

best sometimes forget.' In these most brisk and giddy-paced times we cannot hope for a completely stoic calm. In this case your personality would appear to be reasonably in equilibrium with its environment.

Should there be less than eight affirmative answers to your questionnaire, you are well described by Shakespeare in *Cymbeline*:

‘An angel! or if not,  
An earthly paragon!’

Your conclusions may now be compared with your score in the Second Part of the Questionnaire. Part I seeks to come to grips with the inner life; Part II attempts to discover the extent of your interests and activities in your community.

Withdrawal of the Self from its society can only exacerbate its disfunction: immersion in healthful interests is for most men the only cure of neurotic tendencies. If your score in Part I has in fact been high, i.e. indicative of considerable personality confusion, the score in Part II may indicate the reasons for this.

## PART II

The second part of the Questionnaire offers a brief diagnosis of the reader's mental life. It is based upon the framework suggested by Jowett in his Introduction to the Translation of Plato's *Republic*.

The Master of Balliol suggested that the formal education of the schools should be continued by a man throughout his life, and along ten lines of inquiry. Accordingly, the questions of Part II seek to uncover the reader's mental activity under the following scheme:

- (1) 'Adding to what we are by nature, something of what we are not'; Questions 1 and 2.
- (2) 'Learning to see ourselves as others see us'; Questions 3 and 4.
- (3) 'Judging not by opinion, but by the evidence of the facts'; Questions 5 and 6.
- (4) 'Seeking out the society of superior minds'; Questions 7 and 8.
- (5) 'Studying the lives and writings of great men'; Questions 9 and 10.
- (6) 'Observing the world—and human nature'; Questions 11 and 12.
- (7) 'Receiving kindly the natural influences of the different stages of your life'; Questions 13 and 14.
- (8) 'Having acts or thoughts which are raised above the common practice and opinions of mankind'; Questions 15 and 16.
- (9) 'Pursuing some new and original inquiry'; Questions 17 and 18.
- (10) 'Exerting any effort of mind which calls forth some latent power'; Questions 19 and 20.

By allowing two marks for each 'A' answer, and one mark for each 'B' answer ('C's' being regarded as zeros) it will be seen that the maximum total of forty makes any score of thirty or more an index of a high degree of self-development. We would expect to see such a high score in Part II matched by a like result in Part I, i.e. a low score for personality disbalance.

In such a case, there would appear to be both a well-balanced inner life, and a well-planned life of expressive interests.



A score of less than twenty in Part II would scarcely indicate any great satisfaction with yourself or the world. From it one could only conclude that the scorer was mentally comatose. It would hardly be surprising if with this low score in Part II went a correspondingly high score in Part I. This would be a typically unbalanced and febrile personality unable to reach any sort of equilibrium with environment, and consequently turned in upon itself mentally, as evinced by the questions of Part II.

The average reader might be scored somewhere between twenty and thirty, with a score for Part I of about eight to twelve 'yes' answers.

The conclusion will be evident to the reader. Escape from the personality unrest and disequilibrium indicated in the first set of questions can only be hoped for by attention to the healthy exercise of mental life and emotional interest suggested in the second set.

Unity within the Self is achieved by a balance as between self-interest and community-interest. The individual who is at odds with himself must turn his thinking outwards, get down to earth and to some interest in which he can both lose and find himself.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER VI

#### I

1. *Are you inclined to have a considerable regard for people of a higher social status than your own?* .....
2. *Were your parents unhappily married? i.e. was your early home life shadowed by domestic discord?* .....
3. *Do you feel shy or embarrassed when meeting strangers?* .....
4. *Do you find yourself often making scathing comment on those whose social position may be higher than your own?* .....
5. *Do you take quick offence at implied reflections on your position in the community?* .....
6. *Are you impelled to emulate or excel your associates in matters of social appearances such as clothing, house-furnishings, motor-car, the school to which you send your children? and is your motive in such things one of self-assertion rather than the pursuit of these as inherently important and desirable?* .....

## II

1. *Are you sensitive regarding your physical stature?* .....
2. *Do you resent your wife's (or women's) interest in men of physical distinction among your circle of friends?* .....
3. *Do you become physically aggressive when angry? As a boy did you fight frequently?* .....
4. *Is there some part of your face or figure that you instinctively try to conceal from attention?* .....
5. *Did you in childhood have any organic weakness or bodily defect?* .....
6. *Are you sensitive about jokes or allusions to some physical characteristic like fatness, thinness, facial blemish, baldness, plainness of face or lack of athletic ability?* .....

## III

1. *Are you able to sustain differences of opinion with your employer? i.e. maintain an individual opinion as to matters of your work?* .....
2. *Were you brought up in circumstances of financial stringency? i.e. were your parents 'poor' in money and possessions?* .....
3. *Are you constantly exercised in mind about retaining your position? i.e. do you feel secure in your job?* .....
4. *Would you prefer to keep your present position rather than risk it to get a better one?* .....

5. *Are you hesitant about making suggestions in your work, reluctant to put forward new ideas, diffident about claiming credit for your ideas?* .....
6. *Do you labour under a sense of injustice or lack of appreciation in your employment? i.e. a feeling that you are regarded as ordinary and unimportant to your employer?* .....

## IV

1. *Do you hesitate to bring guests to your home, or do you feel any necessity to apologize for your family, the house-furnishings, the food, the disorder of the home, or the way your family lives?* .....
2. *Do you feel that your wife, children or parents do not properly respect and appreciate you; do not give your wishes proper importance; or ignore your personality?* .....
3. *Do you feel that you are of less importance in the family than some other member or members?* .....
4. *Were you in childhood subjected to cruel or harsh treatment?* .....
5. *Do you feel that your children's lack of brilliance at school, or their unlikeness to yourself at home, is some sort of reflection upon your personality?* .....
6. *Would your best friend regard you privately as a stern father or an exacting husband? i.e. are you considered mildly tyrannical?* .....

## V

1. *Are you sensitive about defects of speech and your conversational limitations?* .....

2. *Were you below average at school?* .....
3. *Do you read mostly the newspapers, digests, magazines and popular organs of opinion rather than solid source material?* .....
4. *Do you find yourself prone to hero-worship? i.e. do you instinctively defer to men of authority and accomplishment, and envy their prominence, quoting their opinions freely?* .....
5. *Do you find yourself taking refuge in dogmatism when you argue, covering your secret feeling of ignorance or limited knowledge by over-assertiveness?* .....
6. *Do you accept the prevailing views quite naturally, and feel that you must conform to current ideas?* .....

## CHAPTER VI

### THE INFERIORITY FEELING

‘I worked for a menial’s hire  
Only to learn, dismayed,  
That any wage I had asked of Life,  
Life would have gladly paid.’

THE most touted of all the psychological mechanisms is probably the inferiority feeling. Were there no such thing, it had been necessary to invent it, if much of human behaviour is to be understood. But Nature herself saw to it that any such invention was needless. Every man creates for himself ample proof of its pestilent presence. Only the fortunate few can feel free of such feelings; and kings have had to wrestle for years with such minor humiliations as defects of speech. Master minds who have grappled the whole world in chains of steel or finance or plastics have been secretly haunted by the defaults of their formal education. Those whose visible achievements may be measured in millions, or in continents conquered, or in terms of an eighth wonder of the world, have from their inner dissatisfactions concluded dejectedly that life is but the pursuit of the unattainable by the useless.

Because there are limits to the accomplishment of any man, there is inevitably something whose unattainability creates in him a feeling of inferiority. This is inherent in personality and life as we know it.

But it is not of this cosmic limitation that men think when they speak of feelings of inferiority. It is

an inner sense of incapacity and inadequacy which constitutes the fifth column of the personality. Who cares that Alexander weeps because there are no fresh worlds to conquer, when the immediate problem is how to make a public speech, or to compensate for a polio-withered leg, or to overcome the stigma of illegitimacy? Those who have had perforce to encompass such things know that no fifth column at Madrid, or Paris, or Pearl Harbour laboured more treacherously, more incessantly, or more furtively than do such disabilities in their fell work of frustrating the personality.

Because feelings of inferiority are so complex and diverse it is necessary to distinguish between things that differ.

First of all, it should be understood that men do suffer from real inferiorities of mind and of body. No amount of application can turn a fifth-rate intellect into that of an Einstein or a Rutherford or a Vaughan Williams. Nor can a lifetime of training and practice make us all into Olympic athletes. There will always be a great number of things beyond the realm of possibility for most men. But this kind of comparative difference is not usually a source of much heart-burning. We do not aspire to be geniuses or physical giants. Feelings of inferiority are engendered when we find that we cannot approximate even to the average and the normal requirements of our individual and social life. It is among our otherwise equals that some infuriating and humiliating defect provokes a sense of inferiority. We do not *have* to run a hundred yards in ten seconds, but we do have to hold our own in the crowded walks of life. When some very real disability of mind or body humbugs and hinders us in things we ought to be able to do, and in fact desire most earnestly to do, a sense of inferiority arises and must be reckoned with.

Secondly, we suffer also from imagined inferiorities. These are none the less real because they are existent only in the mind. If I am persuaded that the fingering technique necessary for Balakireff's 'Islamey' is beyond my powers, though that limitation may exist only in my mind, I shall never play this transcendently difficult show-piece. Since my brain must direct my fingers, to feel inadequate in mind is to *be* inadequate in execution. These feelings of inferiority are as damaging as though they were rooted in a physical paralysis.

Finally, we are sometimes troubled by fully-developed inferiority complexes, which are mental mechanisms superimposed upon the first simple feeling of inadequacy. Finding himself unable to achieve any intellectual distinction by taking a university degree, and being equally unable to compensate for this defect by making large sums of money in the commercial world, a man may develop a thorough-going inferiority complex and finally take a job as a labourer. But he cannot be even a good and efficient labourer because of his uncertain outlook on life. He wants to be a scholar or to be wealthy and admired, but since he can be neither, he withdraws into a style of life which enables him to excuse his failure to himself and to others. He explains that he suffers greatly from mysterious aches and pains; from blinding headaches which no doctor can diagnose. Or perhaps he suggests with a fine air of resignation that his early teachers were such numbskulls that they never gave him the necessary grounding for later qualifications; and in any case he had to leave school early and earn his own living, and was thereby denied the opportunities of more favoured people. By all this ratiocination he hopes to secure the sympathy of others while evading the need for any



genuine effort or achievement. He conceals his failings both from himself and his fellows by showing that he must be judged by more lenient standards than those applied to others. Adler sums this whole rigmarole of sick thinking in his sentence: 'All forms of neurosis and developmental failure are expressions of inferiority and disappointment.'<sup>1</sup>

This, then, is the hierarchy, as it were, of the fifth column within the personality. A real disability disbars me from achievement and I am unhappy about it. If I am fortunate in my parents and mentors in early years I learn to make the best of things and compensate for this inevitable limitation by achievement in some other direction. Being club-footed by birth I apply myself to my lessons and take all the prizes right through school years. I have the secret and unalloyed satisfaction of having the captain of the first fifteen come to me for help with his geometry, and somehow that club-foot doesn't seem quite so tragic. There will be moments throughout life when that foot will remind me of things I would rather forget. But through the good offices of my parents and my friends I will have developed a defence against self-pity. My defect remains always as a feeling of inferiority, but it never becomes an inferiority complex. I have found a compensatory accomplishment.

Should I be harried by a merely imaginary inferiority, several things may happen. I may quickly discover that by trying, I really can do it. A patient tutor, a skilled trainer, or a course of study can dispel what was only a mental mistake. Or I may never discover that my disability is merely imaginary. In this case I will all my life refuse to take the chair, or face a fast bowler or ask the girl to marry me. I may settle for a less

<sup>1</sup> *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology.*

exhilarating life all round and become a non-player who is still reasonably contented. There is no intricate inferiority complex occasioned by my disappointments.

But should this sensible system of adaptation break down somewhere, and I brood darkly about my loss, I am entertaining the beginnings of a complex. These are the dynamiters in the sabotage squad—the dangerous type. A feeling of inferiority—real or imagined—merely puts sand in the bearings. A complex wrecks the whole system. The lights go out, and from then on, the complex manœuvres darkly in the unconscious mind.

This may be taken as a brief case-history of the fifth columnists which work in the personality: the real inferiority, the imagined inferiority, and the inferiority complex.

#### THE 'STYLE OF LIFE'

In the system of Adler's *Individual Psychology* a man's personality is the co-ordinated expression of his main and dominating urge. This 'style of life' differs necessarily from one man to another, so that Mr. A will express his 'will to superiority' in dirt-track riding, whereas Mr. B will have an equally consuming and dominating passion to be the champion rose-grower of the district. The aggressions of both men are expressed satisfactorily to themselves and to their society. This conception of personality is importantly different from that propounded by the Behaviourists. Because Adler sees man's basic urge as a 'will to power' or a 'will to superiority', he was the first to systematize the associated 'sense of inferiority' deriving from failure to accomplish power and superiority. The way in which Adler analyses the 'style of life' differs fundamentally from Watson's 'behaviour-patterns' in that the former

sees the individual as holding the initiative throughout, whereas the latter prefers to regard the man as conditioned throughout. Consequently, Individual Psychology is better able to offer correctives for such feelings of inferiority.

Only the insane can ignore their limitations. They escape into a world of fantasy. Normal people must face their liabilities. The child with a bad stammer may, in a pathetic attempt at 'face-saving', struggle gamely with some corrective technique and front life courageously. He will have emotional conflicts whenever his defects shut him out from normal activities, but he may continue to emulate other children, refusing to withdraw into tongue-tied silence. Contrariwise he may develop a complex about the whole thing till his style of life is completely dominated by it. He will shun all social activities where he is expected to talk, and find that all through life his natural aptitudes are frustrated by this one pervading limitation of speech.

In clinical work with stammerers I have found however, that speech therapy can be effective in a number of ways. There is the class of sufferer who has a definite physical inferiority—cleft palate, malformation of the uvula, bifurcation of the tongue or the various forms of idioglossia. In the consciousness of the sensitive child these defects may be overwhelming. Then there is the type of sufferer who is involved in deep-seated emotional disturbances without any physical speech defect. A mother's stupid persistence in keeping her child a baby can result in a cotton-wool existence which fosters in turn an infantile attitude toward everything. Such a child will cling to a stammer in an unconscious effort to retain motherly solicitude. Nervous at school, he will do nothing to correct his stammer, for that would be to lose the excuse for his indifferent lesson-work.

This is the now-familiar inferiority complex, and unless it is corrected, it will pass over into the youth's and the man's style of life. Happily, there are a number of techniques for aiding such persons to overcome their inferiorities, whether they be real or imaginary.<sup>1</sup>

We are here concerned with the way in which feelings of inferiority can dominate a man's whole style of life. Reference must constantly be made to children, because such troubles have their origin in early years. Here is a man who cannot endure being reproved or corrected. His mind is simply closed to suggestions of improvement. He is both 'touchy' and 'difficult' and has lost several positions because of his rigid, unyielding determination to go his own way. A not uncommon explanation would be that as a child he was forever being confronted with the paragon next door; the neighbour's child who was such a shining example of all the virtues. His parents, with the most innocent intent, inflicted on him a sense of personal devaluation, always an acute and painful element in a child's experience. In maturity, he cannot rid himself of the resultant sense of inferiority, and over the years has built up this defence-mechanism. His way is aggressively the right way—the best way, and nothing can shift him in his fixity of mind.

The same child might have grown up into another style of life. The constant parental suggestion of inferiority might just as easily have destroyed his self-confidence to the point where he simply hasn't a mind of his own. He will lose one job after another because even when shown how, he cannot trust himself to carry it through. In both cases, the roots of inferiority

<sup>1</sup> *Clinical Studies in Speech Therapy*, Anne H. McAllister. *Speech and Voice*, Leopold Stein.

feelings are so matted and tangled that removal is exceedingly difficult.

The unwanted child or one unduly restricted and repressed; the step-child wanting affection; the child of over-ambitious parents who openly voice their disappointment that they haven't a genius in the family; the physically handicapped child and the unusually sensitive child—all such are prone to more than their share of these feelings of not-worth-whileness and inferiority. Whether these feelings dissipate under the corrective of later achievement will depend upon a great many things. But if they remain, the style of life such children adopt will be largely conditioned by the active fifth column implanted in childhood and youth.

#### INDIVIDUAL COMPENSATION

It has already been suggested that the natural corrective for such feelings is achievement in some alternative field, assuming that there is some insurmountable barrier to overcoming the disability itself.

Sometimes the compensation is strikingly successful. The feelings of inferiority in one direction are lost by accomplishment in another. William Wilberforce, a delicate child and dogged throughout life by physical frailty, becomes a Member of the Commons by the time he is twenty-one, and matures into the great slavery-Abolitionist, intimate friend of the younger Pitt. Ramsay MacDonald breaks birth's invidious bar and reaches the point where polite society must not only accept him, but defer to him. This is compensation of the more forceful type, not unusual where a child is subjected to the stigma of lowly or irregular birth.

The child who is over-shadowed by a brilliant elder brother may over-compensate by physical aggression. As an adult his style of life will be patterned along

argumentative and bellicose lines. Or the youth without any school distinction may collect the finest stamp album in the city, finally securing the Blue Mauritius which makes him the envy of the philatelic world.

There is in this, of course, nothing new. That childhood and sex are fundamental factors in human personality was known and shown by Plutarch. Feelings of inferiority have been disrupting human character for something like 50,000 years. Those who enjoy dissection have applied themselves to the personality of Adolph Hitler, a veritable horn-of-plenty for the student of the inferiority complex. Hitler was what he was because as child and youth and man he was a failure in everything he attempted. The respectable employers who shook their heads over this seedy-looking youth, found him unemployable. So he got himself a job at last, having built up in himself the most monstrous inferiority complex in history. One of Adler's followers has a sentence which perfectly explains the background to that monumental delusionist: 'The personality (psyche) is but the instrument of the will to superiority, the will to remedy one's weakness in the face of Nature and Society' (Mairet).

Having failed to hang even wallpaper to any great advantage, Adolph Hitler took compensation in hanging his fellow humans. It is a familiar style of life to those accustomed to deal with delinquents. It is also the crowning argument for correcting inferiority feelings in infancy. Even more desirable is a way of life which prevents their establishment.

#### THE MASCULINE PROTEST

Psychasthenia, that weird half-sister of neurasthenia, is the odd state of personality in which the individual is subject to a variety of imperative ideas, obsessions,

and phobias. Here is a normal, rational fellow who, passing through the streets of London is impelled by he knows not what, to touch every hitching-post along the street. If he misses one, he must retrace his steps and do the deed. Here is another eminent person who throughout life forbids any mention in his presence of the word 'death'. Psychasthenia is generally the result of a faulty heredity, coupled with some abnormal experience early in life. Such tricks of personality pass into traits of character and mark us as 'eccentric' among our fellows. Such oddities may be harmless enough, as when Beethoven must go walking in the rain without coat or hat, and St. Francis finds delight in communion with the birds. These are the harmless concomitants of genius, where the adjective 'eccentric' must be understood in its strict etymological sense of being 'out of centre' from run-of-the-mill personalities. Not that the discovery in oneself of some like characteristic proves genius. All great men may be a trifle odd, but all oddities are not therefore the signs of greatness.

Dr. Johnson was undoubtedly a psychasthenic, and a careful analysis of his extraordinary personality may be an effective method of demonstrating what Adler calls 'the masculine protest'. Briefly stated, this psychological process is the compensatory striving by which a man seeks to overcome his sense of inferiority. We have submitted several examples of such compensation, taken for the most part from normal experience. It is in a somewhat abnormal setting, however, that the masculine protest can best be observed. Where the average man simply switches his strivings for success from one activity to another, defeating his inferiority feelings as he goes, the individual who is slightly 'off-centre', focuses his life in a peculiar masculine protest. Therefore the personality of Dr. Johnson affords an

excellent case of the psychasthenic who strives mightily to compensate for his failings.

Johnson had a bad heredity. His father glowered and gloomed through life in ways that must have been a sore trial to his more equable-tempered wife. To Johnson's faulty family history was added a glandular trouble which in later life appeared to Boswell like some sort of St. Vitus's Dance. To cure this childish trouble, Johnson's parents took him to be 'touched' by Queen Anne, but the impression made upon his sensitive nature was such that to a physical defect was now added a psychological sense of inferiority. Throughout life he jerked and grimaced frightfully. And the 'Queen's touch' remained with him in the singular obsession of the hitching-posts, for it was Johnson who could not walk along Fleet Street without putting his hand upon them all.

Freud thought that the first five years of life are not retained in conscious memory, though they exercise a most profound influence upon our later personality. Certainly, Johnson's acute shyness and feeling of inferiority received sharp compensation when he grew up. His masculine protest took the form of roaring bluster and aggressive, often savage, wit. When Bishop Berkeley disposed of the universe in a single volume, Johnson rebutted him angrily by kicking a stone to prove its reality. He was always kicking or throwing stones. As Dr. MacLaurin says of him: 'Full of rats, poor old gentleman; yet one can't help loving him for his rats.'<sup>1</sup>

There is the incident of Mr. Osborn, the bookseller. Johnson confesses: 'The fellow insulted me, so I beat him; but it was in the privacy of my own chamber—it was not in his shop.' We understand his delicate sensibility. To knock down a publisher was right and

<sup>1</sup> *Mere Mortals.*



proper, but even a publisher has his rights. To knock him down in his own shop would be adding insult to injury, and no Oxford man could do that. It is evident that the involuntary movements which made Johnson so strange a figure to his contemporaries, took their origin in an unconscious memory of the affront to his childish masculinity when his parents took him to be cured of his ailment by the royal touch. Assuredly we cannot treat a child too carefully if we wish it to grow up a sane and normal member of the community.

#### JOHNSON UNDER ANALYSIS

This is all very interesting as exemplifying Adler's theories of compensatory strivings under feelings of inferiority. The man's will-to-superiority will naturally make an endeavour to escape from his initial handicaps. Let us analyse the Great Cham a little further, and note what vast consequences flowed from such small causes as we have discerned in his childhood.

Why did Johnson's ire burst forth against the luckless bookseller? There was, of course, an immediate cause in their difference of opinion. But look a little deeper. Was not Johnson's own father a bookseller? and was he not an insufferable sort of fellow? Was this thrashing a long-buried masculine protest against his father's oppressive attitude toward the weakling boy? I think so, from the following circumstance.

In the market-place of the Staffordshire town of Uttoxeter, an elderly man stands bare-headed in the pouring rain. His attitude is strangely quiet and solemn, rather like that of a worshipper doing humble reverence before a shrine. Rough market-women and rude boys look on in wonder, while the bolder among them jeer at this extraordinary man, who for once answers them not a word.

Why does Dr. Johnson stand in this muddy gutter in the old market-place of his youth? He is doing penance for a sin that has lain heavily upon his psychasthenic soul for fifty years. He has told no one of his intention, and it is not till many years later, when a friend casually refers to the duty of honouring one's parents, that Johnson so much as mentions the incident at Uttoxeter. He explains that while he could not in general accuse himself of being an undutiful son: 'Once indeed I was disobedient. I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of my refusal, and the remembrance of it is still painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault. I went to Uttoxeter, in very bad weather, and stood for a considerable time bareheaded in the rain, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory.'

Years after the event, a man routs his fears and quietens his conscience. He hopes to atone for the shyness of youth which drove him to refuse to stand with his father and sell books. Now by the processes of poetic justice, his whole life is spent among books.

It may be thought that this makes rather too much of the father-son relation. I do not think so. Johnson's father was too poor to provide the necessary fees for his son to go to Oxford—either too poor or too mean. So fresh humiliations await the touchy youth when he goes up. Someone, pitying his broken shoes, places a new pair outside his door, but Johnson flings them away in a rage. After three years at the University, funds are still not forthcoming from the father, so Johnson comes down without completing his course and taking his degree. Is it unreasonable to suppose that it is later shame at the deep resentment against his father which finally moves Johnson to make his

pilgrimage to Uttoxeter? A great many less reasonable assumptions have been taken as divine revelation in Freud's ingenious conclusions.

Because he has no degree, Johnson fails to secure the teaching post he seeks when he comes down from Oxford. So he turns his compensatory strivings into the gargantuan task of the Dictionary. When at last the monumental work is published, the Earl of Chesterfield attempts to patronize Johnston. The reply is a classic: 'Is not a patron, My Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been earlier, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am known and do not want it. Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less.'

And notice, if you will, how the symbol of the bookseller (his father) enters and re-enters. For his vasty labours on the Dictionary, Johnson received from his publishers a sum of fifteen hundred guineas, all of which and more had been spent before the last pages were on the presses. Twice during the following year the author was arrested for accumulated debts. Yet he is so testy about receiving help too long delayed that he affronts the Earl beyond remedy. Yet again, when his friend Goldsmith is in acute distress, Johnson undertakes to see and to sell the poet's manuscript of a novel. After hawking it about London all that he can get for *The Vicar of Wakefield* is a mere sixty pounds. Of a truth, Johnson had little reason to love booksellers.

This Adlerian analysis has been taken to some length,

Bedborough who sold it was prosecuted and ruined by the proceedings. Many university libraries refused to carry Ellis's works for years after. Because he wrote scientifically on such delicate issues as homo-sexuality and eonism, the author was treated as a literary leper. It requires little imagination to assess the shrinking of so gentle a spirit as his under such a reception. This was the acid test for his compensatory strivings. Constitutionally unable to face men in the normal course of a doctor's work, he now found that he could not even approach his fellows through his scientific writings. It required considerable intellectual courage to pursue the style of life he had chosen. The protests of his own reserved nature against such a volume of social disapproval might well have driven him into obscurity just as T. E. Lawrence chose escape from a world become intolerable.

But Ellis's integrity of character could accept no compromise. His conclusions are not without relevance to our inquiry into personality. He saw clearly that study of human abnormalities was often the best and surest way of knowing the truth about normal people. In the 'nineties the idea was less commonplace than it is now. In biology we owe to the study of diabetes much of our knowledge of the function of carbohydrates in the chemical exchanges of the body. Scientific consideration of cretinism and acromegaly have contributed much to our knowledge of the internal secretions of the body in normalcy. Havelock Ellis proposed to study sexual abnormalities in order to conquer the dark hinterland of sexual needs and behaviour in all men. He gave the world a new outlook on the sexual hygiene of the individual, but in so doing he had to endure all the pains and penalties of the pioneer against ignorance and obscurantism.

The significant point is that Ellis came to his life's

work through compensation for his acutely reserved nature; and even when he encountered far greater difficulties, persisted to a complete self-fulfilment. Of him, H. L. Mencken has written: 'If the test of the personal culture of a man be the degree of his freedom from the banal ideas and childish emotions which move the great masses of men, then Havelock Ellis is undoubtedly the most civilized Englishman of his generation.'

#### SUMMARY

It has been said that feelings of inferiority may be real or psychotic, i.e. rooted in fact or in phantasy. But irrespective of their basis in actual physical or mental defects, such a sense and such feelings of inferiority are intensely real and of the utmost consequence to the personality.

Successful people are those who resolutely and sensibly combat their limitations. To do this is often to dispel the illusory defects and to compensate for those that are real. Such a course gradually reduces the number and intensity of our inferiorities.

Unsuccessful people are those who try to conceal and escape from their limitations, thereby increasing the disabilities under which they labour whether in fact or in fancy.

Neurasthenic people are those who have failed either to resolve or to compensate their limitations. Their inferior feelings have been driven deep into their unconscious, there to breed doubt and uncertainty, flowering into emotional complexes.

Examples have been cited to indicate how the Adlerian processes of compensatory striving function within the personality. Weaknesses and limitations are by these methods made a springboard to alternative forms of achievement.

The position here taken is that throughout these emotional readjustments, the initiative lies with the man himself, in whose hands alone lie the corrective measures for his feelings of inferiority.

What are these corrective measures by which feelings of inferiority may be compensated and overcome? The answer is best given in Adler's own words:

'Individual psychology considers the essence of therapy to lie in making the individual aware of his lack of co-operative power, and to convince him of the origin of this lack in his early childhood adjustments. His collaboration is the next step. His "inferiority" must be revealed in its true nature. Courage and optimism must then be awakened, and the man shown that the proper meaning to his life must be given by himself.'

How can this be translated into plain terms likely to be serviceable for the reader in facing such problems as he may have? Let us endeavour to find an answer in case-book form.

It must be remembered that Adler's methods can only be applied *in toto* by personal consultations between the individual and the specialist. Our alternative method of self-analysis by questionnaires cannot hope therefore to effect comparable results. We shall nevertheless essay a series of general analyses.

#### (1) *Social inferiority-feelings*

The man of short stature who is 'cocky' and opinionated is familiar enough. So also is the fellow who affects long hair and Bohemian clothes. Another type cannot say a good word about anyone, and is chronically critical of everything and everybody.

Such forms of assertion are called by Adler 'ambivalent compensation', for by this process, these people

exchange their feelings of limitation for an exaggerated superiority.

Because they are conscious of being below the average and the normal in one thing or another, they take the short-cut to correcting such things and simply over-talk, over-dress or over-criticize others. This is patently not the way to go about it. It requires little thought to see that such personalities merely become incongruous. Instead of compensating intelligently, they assume a pose which can only focus attention on the thing they wish to conceal. It is as though the burglar studiously wore his mask in the street, or carefully left his jemmy poking out of his pocket. Such ambivalent compensation demonstrates that the longest way round is often the shortest way home.

Alternative compensation is the second process. The little man accepts the fact that by thought he cannot add an inch to his physical stature, confidential shoes with built-in heels excepted. Desiring to command attention and respect, he turns his energies into another channel. Did not Billy Rose become a champion stenographer? At any rate he is the pocket-size entrepreneur of the gigantic in show-business. To underline his smallness and complete his compensation, did he not marry a six-feet-two chorine?

Other small men have made themselves authorities in intellectual matters, or racing form, or the habits of birds, or long drives on the links. If this is successfully done, such individuals soon correct any disposition on the part of others to minimize.

It is possible to take one's compensatory strivings very seriously. It is thus that many an underprivileged person drives his way to a position of authority and importance in society. He makes his initial handicaps a vaulting-board to final success. Mr. Shinwell affords

what we suspect is his own *pro vita sua* in a passage that occurs in his chapter on 'Class distinctions'.<sup>1</sup>

'Our system of human valuations requires drastic overhauling. When the air-raid terror was at its height, who were the men of the greatest worth to the community? Was it the multiple-company directors with no skill in their hands, or the men who could mend gas- and water-mains, repair railways and roadways, drive trains, buses and trams, and re-establish communications?

'The late Private Wakenshaw, ex-newspaper seller of the streets of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who by the manner of his death won the Victoria Cross at Mersa Matruh, could not have reached greater heights if, instead of being reared as a "dead-end-kid" he had been turned out by the public-school system.'

This extraordinary argument can only be understood from the example Mr. Shinwell himself affords us of reaching the Commons from humble beginnings and quite understandably approving everyone else who does the same neat job in compensation. In short, social disparities which at first appear a bar sinister, may, with courage and determination provide the spur some men need to do and be their best.

A feeling of social inferiority may arise from the accident of birth, a working-class background, lack of higher education, rough speech habits, peculiarities of physique, lowly occupation, bad manners or a snobbish class system. When these things are stated they appear trifling occasions for a lifetime in sackcloth. If the democratic way of life means anything at all it justifies the conclusion that within the aristocracy of ability, we need to be untroubled by such factors. But let it be understood that it is for each man to demonstrate his own superiority to these limitations. Sansculottism

<sup>1</sup> *The Britain I Want*, p. 33.



does not make bad manners, coarse speech and ignorance any the less unpleasant. These disqualifications to social acceptance can be annulled only by the individual himself reaching a more satisfactory personal standard, not by de-valuing the social standards. In more familiar terms, it is by levelling up, not levelling down, that a man can assimilate to standards that reproach him.

Only when he has done the best that is in him, and attained the highest personal standards of performance possible, can a man conclude that his society must take him and like him the way he is. Short of that he must be prepared for tacit social disapprovals, which if he has any sensibility at all, must create in him feelings of inferiority. It can be said without hesitation that feelings of social inferiority are almost entirely rooted in things that are remediable. If our democracy has in fact substituted an aristocracy of achievement for an aristocracy of birth, such feelings are removable. Each man must liquidate his own fifth column.

## *(2) Feelings of physical inferiority*

Children born with hereditary organic weaknesses face a handicap which calls for more than ordinary courage and determination. There is in the civilized world a vast amount of organized sympathy for such sufferers. But when all has been said and done for these unfortunate ones; when medical science, occupational therapy and institutional provision have done all they can, it still remains for the individual to order his style of life around self-assertion and not self-pity.

The ancient world resolved this problem by the exposure of weak children and the exclusion of the unfit from social responsibility. Nowadays special schools and training centres seek to equip them for useful lives. The Nuffield benefactions for crippled

children within the Empire are a splendid example of the modern approach to the physically handicapped. The United States has similar Foundations.

A good deal less has been done for the less-handicapped. For those who suffer from a defective nervous system, from weak eyesight, loss of hearing, defaults in temperament and a personality impaired in some partial way, there are no institutional aids. This army of the walking wounded has little planned assistance in dealing with its inner saboteurs. Feelings of inferiority are for these folk very real, and cannot be dissipated by a few brisk words.

But hypochondria is not the way out. When medical science has done what it can it is for the individual to do what he may.

Not everyone can be as determined as the Roosevelts: Theodore who conquered his physical weakness by ranch life and became an explorer, rough-rider and the exponent of the strenuous life; and Franklin Delano who won the admiration of the world by his fight against polio and steel leg-braces. Only such men who have themselves conquered their handicaps are entitled to offer advice to their troubled companions in suffering. It is better that the rest of us shall try to understand and help, rather than moralize.

But where inferiority feelings arise from mere wounded vanity, we need have no such seemly reticence. The man who feels inferior because of a bulbous nose or large ears or a bald skull needs to learn to laugh as President Woodrow Wilson did in quoting Anthony Euwer's lines:

'As a beauty I'm not a great star.  
Others are handsomer far;  
But my face—I don't mind it  
Because I'm behind it;  
It's the folks out in front that I jar.'

### (3) *Feelings of career-inferiority*

This problem may arise from a genuine maladjustment. A man may be ill-suited to his work, frustrated from any proper self-fulfilment. Economic necessity compels us to live as Charles Lamb said, shackled to wooden desks till the wood enters our soul. Such dreams as are ours do but mock us, and it is not merely a pretty prosodic period to say that many a mute inglorious Milton slaves his life away in a mechanical monotony.

Job-analysis and personnel engineering are techniques for finding square holes for everybody, but the task is like mopping up the Pacific with a duster. There is too much to be done and there are few doing it. Until vocational guidance is universal and complete, we must come to terms with round holes.

What sort of best can we make of a feeling of career-inferiority?

If it is not too late, let a man take his courage in his hands and start again elsewhere. In a quickly-changing world fresh opportunities occur which it is man's plain duty not to miss. He who qualifies by professional examination must frequently move on to better himself; ten thousand creative workers are daily outgrowing their employment; and the hit-or-miss methods of vocational choice must inevitably have periodic adjustments if we are to escape the bondage of inadequate work.

Possibly a man's feeling of inferiority lies not in his job so much as in himself. He would feel that way in any career because of the fifth column within his personality, constantly at work against him. Parental disparagements, schooling interrupted by long illness, maternal fixations—these and many more such factors

can infect the personality and render it ineffective in any situation. Such a man must change himself, not his job. He must realize that undue deference to seniors, obsequiousness to an employer, subservience to those in higher positions and general self-depreciation may be causes, rather than effects of inferiority feelings. Self-vindication is a necessary preliminary to achieving status with employers. Aesthetic pursuits, sport, reading and creative leisure may work wonders in a man's attitude toward his job. By offsetting its humdrum character through achievements outside, a man develops confidence and corrects any feeling of career-inferiority.

Or it may be that feelings of inferiority will betray a man into ambivalent compensation. His symptoms may be boastfulness, hyper-criticism of others, jealousy of their success, boorishness, or any one of a dozen unpleasant mannerisms which estrange his associates and antagonize his employers. These attitudes are not infrequently disguises assumed by a deep-seated career-inferiority as a self-protection against disappointment. In such a case a man must take a firm hold of himself and tackle the real problem—his own personal character.

#### (4) *Feelings of domestic inferiority*

There are few domestic maladjustments which cannot be ameliorated by self-analysis and self-adjustment. Chicago manages to cut rather than unravel the Gordian knot. With divorce organized into assembly-line speed and precision, and taking on the average just three minutes to effect, who would bother with self-analysis and self-discipline? Obviously not the Chicagoans, who file one divorce suit for every two-and-a-half marriages. That is one way out of domestic infelicities; a way which as a rule leads

straight into others. The fifth column is never affected by a change of government.

These feelings are in modern society both numerous and troublesome, and the divorce statistics are but one side of their cost. The child of an unhappy home, sensitive to its discord, must inevitably acquire a wrong style of life with regard to sex. In his own adult life he is at least likely to perpetuate the maladjustments which plagued his parents. On the other hand the lesson may have been so salutary that he will over-compensate in his own experience and achieve a remarkably happy domestic life. Having seen what incompatibility can do, he takes particular care in his own choice of a wife, and having seen a husband's inconsiderateness may himself prove to be a model.

There is a sound British law against a stranger's interference in domestic discords. Good taste prohibits casual advice to the unhappily married. On such an acutely personal issue only general comment may with propriety be made.

The ego-centric personality should never marry. Unless one believes in marrying a drunkard to reform him, no woman will in her right senses marry a selfish, self-centred man in hopes of doing him any good. If the high call of courtship cannot change him, marriage certainly will not, though family responsibilities have been known to evoke a better side to such a man.

Only a percentage of married people should have children. Too many fail in that solemn responsibility. Not a few men refuse to have children in the illusory hope of thereby maintaining marriage as an extended honeymoon. Large numbers never outgrow the typical male conceit that a woman should be simultaneously and permanently wife, mistress, mother, housemaid, and husband-worshipper. From such

misconceptions flow many of the frictions which create inferiority feelings.

Generalizations about marriage always seem smug. The most acute and personal problem we face cannot be dismissed with a handful of *bon mots*. Admittedly, husbands are difficult. So are wives. The whole tangled skein requires the judicial mind of the Supreme Court, and even judges have been known to seek divorce. At the peril of seeming sententious I set down the opinion of Louis Anspacher in his Boston address of 1934: 'Marriage is that relationship between man and woman in which the independence is equal, the dependence mutual, and the obligation reciprocal.' The joint domicile of two human personalities is no light undertaking.

There are no easy solutions of real domestic inferiority or of that which is only imagined. But whatever parents do, the cost to their children will be many times higher than theirs. There are few more salutary checks to the hasty or selfish resolution of domestic maladjustments than that: look at your inferiority feelings—and their consequences—through the eyes of the children.

This is to exchange a sense of inferiority for one of high responsibility.

(5) *Mental or educational inferiority feelings*

Gibbon once declared that every person has two educations; one which he receives from others, and the more important, which he gives himself. There is much that a man can do to overtake any deficiencies in his formal education. The key lies in Gibbon's more important alternative.

The dissemination of knowledge to-day is such that systematic reading over a twelve-month will give a

normally intelligent person a working knowledge of most non-technical subjects, sufficient to command respect in any average company. Predigested information is so handily available as to make serious academic study comically superfluous. No man can complain that learning is the privilege of the few.

The plaint of lack of time is equally untenable in an age dedicated to the forty-hour week. In any case, as T. P. Cameron Wilson says, that argument invariably cloaks the refuge of the lazy: 'God gives to each man, however beset he may be with the world, a few minutes at least each day, when he is utterly alone. I have read Shelley in a public lavatory, and learnt Rupert Brooke's war sonnets by heart while I was doing morning duty to this my body.'<sup>1</sup>

Several men of the R.N.Z.A.F. sat and passed degree examinations so far up in the Pacific forward areas that they spent part of the examination period in fox-holes while a 'condition-red' prevailed. If study can be done under these conditions it can be done anywhere. If a man feels mentally or educationally inferior the remedy is to his hand.

#### THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Questionnaire falls into five parts, corresponding with the five foregoing sections. Several questions in each part are designed to uncover the reader's early 'family-style of life', and to suggest by implication the source of possible feelings of inferiority. Other questions refer to his own 'life-goal', probing for exaggerations and over-compensations for such youthful maladjustments. These have been shown to be subterfuges for evading the challenge of one's environment; fictions by which we hope to escape into unreality.

<sup>1</sup> *Waste-paper Philosophy*, IX.

If you return four or more affirmative answers in any section, the indications are that you labour under significant inferiority feelings in that particular department of life.

Should you find that you have such a result in three or more of the five sections, your feelings would seem to be dangerously widespread throughout your personality.

Where affirmative answers predominate in only one or two of the five parts, you would seem to be the average and normal individual. You will at least have located your developmental problems.

It may be serviceable to have the key-questions in each section picked out for brief comment, remembering that feelings of inferiority almost invariably originate in childhood experiences.

#### PART I: SOCIAL INFERIORITY FEELINGS

The relevant question here is 'Were your parents unhappily married?' The tendency is for a child of such a home to feel himself outside of and unimportant to his society (the family). Inferiority feelings engendered here will tend to manifest themselves in later adult life by a sense of dis-function in the wider community. The man tends to drift into either the misanthrope, or its opposite, the social bore who is offensively hearty. His psychological compensatory strivings may be withdrawal (the misanthrope and the recluse) or ambivalence (the too-sociable, gregarious type).

#### PART II: PHYSICAL INFERIORITY FEELINGS

Here the question that may be pivotal is: 'Did you in childhood suffer from any organic weakness of body



or any protracted illness which affected you psychologically?' Once more, the tendency for such a child in later life is either concealment or compensatory strivings. The other questions in Part II will reveal the degree of success with which such an individual has triumphed over any such disability.

#### PART III: CAREER INFERIORITY FEELINGS

When the reader has answered question two, 'Were you brought up in circumstances of financial stringency?' he has touched the lodestone of so much aspiring in later life. A small minority of such children drift into crime and anti-social conduct, as their masculine protest against life. But the greater number achieve compensation in a higher social status. The desire to afford our children greater advantages than were available for ourselves in youth is basic in human aspiration. The memory of early poverty is a sharp spur to ambition and determination.

#### PART IV: DOMESTIC INFERIORITY FEELINGS

The clue to this section of life often lies in some such question as that proffered. 'Were you subject to harsh or cruel treatment as a child?' Again the possibilities are two-fold. Such a child may adopt a morbid life-style in which the main pattern is an excessive desire for power and authority. Such a personality may even find satisfaction in bullying his own children. Rightly understood this can be seen to be an ambivalent compensation which, denied freedom itself, cannot permit freedom to anyone else. Or on the other hand, the child of harsh and unnatural parents may compensate positively, avoiding the traits he learned to hate and fear in others from his own early experience.

## PART V: MENTAL OR EDUCATIONAL INFERIORITY FEELINGS

The provocative question is again number two: 'Were you below average at school?' The foundations of later feelings of inferiority are often laid in disappointing school grades. Until educational theory overtakes educational practice, and we can as we know we should, fit the training to the child rather than the child to a rigid system, a sense of inferiority will needlessly be inculcated in many youngsters.

But later life offers constant opportunity for a man to concentrate upon those interests which he can do well. The other questions of Part V are designed to discover the extent and the kind of compensatory effort you have invested in developing your personality. Dogmatism, intolerance, suspicion of mental ability and jealousy of more successful rivals would mark the unresolved mental conflicts.

Your scoring should now give you something of a case-history of the members of your fifth column. You will need patience and determination, but they can be dealt with one by one. There can be no internal concord till this is fairly faced.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER VII

#### I

1. *When asked to take the chair, to make a presentation or assume some such responsibility, do you excuse yourself and depreciate your ability?* .....
2. *Do rebuffs tend to deflate your self-confidence?* .....
3. *Were either of your parents of a dominating personality?* .....
4. *Have you any chosen method of self-expression i.e. drawing, writing, handicraft, public speaking, etc.?* .....

#### II

1. *Do you inwardly rebel against orders and commands?* .....
2. *Is your health a frequent topic of conversation?* .....
3. *Do you like discussing your personal problems with friends?* .....
4. *Are you conscious of a sense of slight if your opinion is not asked?* .....

#### III

1. *In arguments do you employ expressions such as 'You may take it from me . . .' and 'I know what I'm talking about'?* .....
2. *Do you use generalizations like, 'He's either a knave or a fool' or 'Every scientist is agreed,' etc.?* .....

3. *'This war was caused by the Treaty of Versailles'; would you agree with this?* .....
4. *Were your natural desires for freedom and self-expression repressed in childhood?* .....

## IV

1. *Do you allow others to have their own way?* .....
2. *Do you chide your partner for the way he plays his cards?* .....
3. *Do you avoid telling people their moral duty?* .....
4. *Do you find that you cannot resist being a back-seat driver?* .....

## V

1. *If blocked in traffic do you become annoyed with the officer on duty?* .....
2. *Do you employ sarcasm or a caustic form of wit?* .....
3. *Were you often unjustly punished as a child?* .....
4. *Do you reprimand people who do things that displease you?* .....

## VI

1. *Do you have to watch your enthusiasm lest it run away with you?* .....
2. *Do you enjoy driving a car at high speed?* .....
3. *Do you use exaggerated verbal expressions?* .....
4. *Were you, as a child, allowed to do largely what you wished, in your own way, and without much discipline?* .....

## VII

1. *Are your feelings easily hurt? do you tend to be 'buffy'?* .....

# THE QUESTIONNAIRE

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2. *Do you feel it particularly desirable to know what people think and say about you?* .....
3. *Do you remember praise and criticism for a long time? referring to them in your own mind when making decisions?* .....
4. *Are you 'natural' with people, or are you more naturally 'on your guard'?* .....

## VIII

1. *Are you ever disposed to gain an advantage by flattery?* .....
2. *Do you release your pent-up feelings in periodic 'hate-sessions' about people?* .....
3. *Have you at times an inclination to write an anonymous letter?* .....
4. *If your friend asks for your opinion of his conduct or for a criticism of himself, do you avoid hurtful answers?* .....

## IX

1. *Do you find that you talk about yourself a good deal?* .....
2. *Are you finicky and precise about matters of dress, speech and manners? i.e. fussy and over-attentive to such matters?* .....
3. *Are you susceptible to flattery and praise, happy when you have them, and depressed in their absence?* .....
4. *Are you thoughtful about and considerate for, the interests of others?* .....

## CHAPTER VII

### THE EGO-SENTIMENT

‘It is a commonplace that the core of one’s being is often at war with the cupidities and desires, the whims and fancies of the normal self. Man is divided against himself, and only becomes whole when the inner core is integrated with the outer, more personal self, when the everyday “I” becomes one with the inner “I”.’

V. H. MOTTRAM

*The Physical Basis of Personality*

THE most powerful element in personality is this master sentiment—the Ego. A man’s estimate of himself may fluctuate with his fortunes, but there is no resilience like that of self-esteem. An incorrigible faith in oneself is fundamental to a positive, purposeful life. Without it, man is gelded: bereft of personality. The obverse truth is that the ego-sentiment grown monstrous and unbalanced becomes a Führer-Prinzip whose last lunacy is to act as locum-tenens for God Almighty.

As head of the personality’s hierarchy, the ego-sentiment requires to be confined within a constitutional government of the Self. The sentiments constitute a Cabinet to this Premier, but they and it must at all times be subject to recall. To allow the Ego to dictate is to distort the whole personality.

Turgenev speaks of ‘that air of superiority to the rest of the world which usually disappears when once

the twenties have been passed'.<sup>1</sup> If our mental age kept always pace with our chronological age, we should hear less of the ego-sentiment seizing power. For egoism is characteristic of immaturity and arrested development.

From which it would appear that while it is important to be pushing, it is fatal to appear so. A somewhat less cynical explanation of the ego-urge may be found in the proper function of the whole self-regarding sentiment, which is a man's individual system of ideas and feelings concerning himself. For we have not only to acquire personality; we must also avoid its deterioration. In private as in public life, perpetual vigilance is the price of freedom from oppression. A man can be as much a slave to himself as to any man, with this important difference; that when he is mastered by egoism, his servitude is a pleasing conceit.

Egotism may conveniently be regarded as 'self-commendation, self-exaltation in thought, speech or writing, vanity'. Egoism is 'regarding the self as the centre of everything'. Egoism is the sentiment, of which egotism is the expression.

#### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

'Let me take you a button-hole lower'—*Love's Labour Lost*, Act V, Sc. 7.

The expression we give our ego-sentiment takes individual forms with each of us: and what is egotism in one personality, may in another be a pose assumed deliberately and with intent. When Anatole France was introduced to Bernard Shaw and asked who he was, the sage answered for himself: 'I am, like yourself, a man of genius.' To which Anatole riposted: 'Ah well, even a whore has the right to call herself a pleasure merchant.' Since those days Shaw has become

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers and Sons*.

sacrosanct; but where lesser creatures adopt so outrageous a mask they can expect to be ostracized rather than canonized.

No less tiresome is the affectation of a false modesty, but who can preserve a happy balance as between self-assertion and self-subordination? The amount of self-assertion tolerable in any personality varies enormously from one people and period to another. Therefore the ego-sentiment is best regarded as a problem of good taste rather than of morals.

Nor are we dissecting the depraved. The defects of personality to be discussed are quite commonly encountered. Some are the concomitants of success in life: others betokening failure—a sort of revenge upon Society for its withheld rewards.

Should any reader find his withers rung, that which follows is only to whom it may concern.

(1) *False Modesty*

‘And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin  
Is the pride that apes humility.’

COLERIDGE

A common form of egotism is the pose of false modesty. This ostentatious avoidance of even the semblance of self-regard is unhealthy and unnatural. One of its infantile conventions is autophoby—the fear of the personal pronoun. It traps a writer into endless circumlocutions to avoid the solecism of appearing in the first person. Like so many other conventions, it masks the evident, not the actual self-assertion. The offence to good taste lies in seeming, rather than being. The personality tends thus to become a pose and a pretence through studied dissimulation.

Certainly, the more general encouragement of healthy self-assertion and self-expression would rid



society of some unpleasant phenomena. The incidence of bullying and cruelty would be appreciably reduced, for these are often the indirect expression of thwarted assertion. The number of lies, both black and white, would be considerably fewer, since a great deal of lying emanates from the stifled wish to be important. Fads and freakishness would decline enormously; the police would get fewer false confessions from exhibitionists; the fire-brigades would receive fewer false alarms from street buttons; patent medicines would run short of unsolicited testimonials, for these are usually due to someone's childish desire to see his name in print. Not the least of these gains would be that specialists in nervous disorders would enjoy a marked increase in leisure.

This is but part of the substantial argument for the abandonment of egotism in its inverted forms of false modesty.

(2) *Monomania*

‘There is a luxury in self-dispraise;  
And inward self-disparagement affords  
To meditative spleen a grateful feast.’

WORDSWORTH

In monomania emerges a most curious twist of the ego-sentiment. Byron had this fault pre-eminently. His morbid love of an ill reputation, moved him to claim one long before he had had time to merit it. His contemporaries could debate whether the poet was ever guilty of any evil act or disposition save those of his own telling. From which it appears that Byron deliberately cultivated an undeserved notoriety.

The ways of the human mind frequently do despite to all the processes of rationality, and monomania is one of the more baffling oddities. There was scarcely any offence with which Byron would not, with complete

indifference, accuse himself. Whilst he was on the Continent he would continually write paragraphs against himself in foreign journals and delight in their republication in English newspapers.

The same distorted vanity would induce the poet to report with regard to his parents and family and ancestry things which any normal man would wish to conceal. That these statements were false, but makes the whole affair the more extraordinary. For example, he told one confidant that his father was insane and had killed himself.

In the face of this type of eccentricity, the Adlerian analysis is not without resource. Once more the process of compensatory strivings is the key.

Byron never becomes reconciled to his club-foot, particularly after his physical affliction lost him Mary Chaworth. He was deeply in love with this girl; despite the day when he overheard her say to her maid: 'Do you think I could care for that lame boy?' The agony of that double humiliation never fully abated, and it is hardly special pleading to suggest that much of the later irregularity of his life can be traced to these mortal wounds to his self-esteem. Notoriety acted as balm to his hurt pride and wounded self-love. Many years after that bitter blow, he wrote: 'I have taken all my fables about the celestial nature of women from the perfection my imagination created in her.'

If this be a reasonable analysis, then Byron's peculiar enjoyment of a bad reputation falls into place as an expression of the will-to-superiority. As a schoolboy, the poet compensated for his physical inferiority by becoming a champion swimmer and by such risky exploits as the quad-climbing incident. In that typically undergraduate form of wit, he climbed the ramparts and roof of Trinity College library and at dead of night clad the

statues of Faith, Hope and Charity with surplices, placing on each saintly head a bedroom plenishment. Those who have surveyed the course will appreciate the hardihood of this piece of quadrangle mountaineering.

It was the same ego-urge which drove him, whilst in Turkey, to emulate the mythical Leander by swimming the Hellespont. How else can we explain his insistence on being presented to the Sultan in precedence to the British ambassador? Why should a noble lord want to fight duels with the Albanians if not to prove to himself and the world that his club-foot affected him no whit? The aptness of the Masculine Protest theory will be apparent.

Monomania can only be understood as inverted egotism.

### (3) *Self-importance*

‘A prosperous man of business, who probably never read anything but a newspaper since he left school.’

SHAW

The possession of lucrative talents is certainly something, especially a talent for business. But to know one's tables and to be able to count money is a somewhat slender basis for the self-satisfaction and self-importance which are the face-value of so much contemporary commerce.

There are few expressions of egotism more tedious than the successful man who can talk of little else save his own affairs. His specialty is himself and his trivia. He may be well-meaning and harmless enough, but life is too short to be spent in listening to a single song, however sweet it may be to the singer.

Of course, it is all the result of a wrong scale of values. In such men the self-assertive instinct has crowded the supporting players clean off the stage.

If it is the gnome-like Beaverbrook, who by his feverish energies made himself a million before he was thirty, and went on to become press-lord and Minister of the Crown, perhaps there is something to make a song about. These are the coloraturi of the self-singers whose success is so dazzling and against whom it would be futile to rail. It is the lesser vocalists of the chorus who make self-importance so tedious an accompaniment.

Most of these lesser men have imposed upon themselves an almost deliberate impoverishment of the mind. They are, for the most part, blithely unaware that their emotional and imaginative life stands at zero. How else could such incongruous self-importance survive? The type are easily recognized—specialists in babbity, hearty greeters, convivial club-men, social aspirants all.

Nor are such types confined to the counting house. There are university professors who spend their lives contending for issues as dead as Eratosthenes. The world will be tolerably content to remain ignorant as to which six of the seven cities that claimed Homer were liars. But such matters are enormously important to a certain type of escapist savant. Not unknown is the fine flurry of self-importance with which the politician fiddles till the flood comes and sweeps us all away. Politics is, as Robert Louis Stevenson described it, 'perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary'—and therefore in which self-importance can pass as a qualification.

This is manifestly and grossly unfair to many. Hence these strictures apply 'to whom it may concern'.

#### (4) *Dogmatism*

'My salad days  
When I was green in judgement.'

*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I, Sc. 5.

McDougall deals pithily with this personality-defect: 'The man who always insists on his opinion and lays down the law for all to hear. If he listens to another man's views or arguments, he is not influenced by them, no matter how well-informed or well-reasoned they may be; or he is merely incited by them to reassert his own in more extreme form. It is a species of contra-suggestibility, and possibly was acquired as a youthful reaction of self-defence against a domineering parent. It is disagreeable in company; and it renders its victims incapable of profiting by advice and example, or of correcting his own judgements and opinions under the influence of those who are wiser or better informed.'<sup>1</sup>

McDougall's passage is doubly interesting because of its applicability to Adler's theory of such behaviour as a compensation for youthful inferiority. Those with an appetite for speculation might ponder the probable changes in the course of history had Napoleon Bonaparte, Kaiser Wilhelm and Adolph Hitler not been unimpressive physical specimens. If the histories are to be believed all three had bodily defects, all three smarted for years at being relegated to positions of inferiority in their youth, and all three truckled and swaggered forever after.

All took their revenge upon an unfriendly society, and against a step-motherly nature. These three musketeers were all fond of writing and addressing their troops, declaiming their noisy opinions; posing as 'inspired', and scorning all counsel.

Their hyper-egotism had world-shaking consequences. Ours may be but a minor irritation. But whether our self-assertion be cosmic or only comic, it is the uncompromising nature of the dogmatic personality that works the mischief. Such men utter all

<sup>1</sup> *Character and Conduct of Life*, p. 154.

they think with violence, and when they are the most cocksure they are commonly the most in error.

To fulminate is easier than to meditate; opinion is more lightly come by than knowledge; it is notoriously a tendency to throw heat rather than light into a discussion. If the habit hardens into a fixed frame of mind, the dogmatist comes at last to walk among his fellows as a god amongst vermin.

There is no cure for the dogmatist that will be permanently effective save exposure and ridicule. These salutary disciplines no bubble reputation can long survive.

(5) *Censoriousness*

‘And so it criticized each flower,  
This supercilious seed;  
Until it woke one summer hour  
And found itself a weed.’

Rightly understood, this personality-defect is another compensatory striving of a felt inferiority. This type of individual always knows who is to blame, and hastens to say so. He assigns fault freely but accepts none himself. A sort of divinity hedges him round so that he never votes for the wrong candidate, never trusts a Jew, or a Catholic, never catches cold, never wastes time, never misses a bus, and can't for the life of him understand why anyone can be so stupidly imperfect. He is altogether too good to be true.

It is the characteristic of the censorious type of personality that it concentrates on the midges and lets the mammoth roam. Or as Juvenal long ago observed, this temperament pardons the ravens but rebukes the doves.

The world was out of joint long before the Prince of Denmark noticed it, and shows signs of remaining dislocated for some time yet. Should it ever recover, it will owe little to the censorious. There is nothing

'magnetic' about this sort of personality unless we think of those special trucks which pick up highway nails. The well-mannered mind may fix a limit to its critical faculties; but the censorious person sees sermons in stones, tongues in trees, books in the running brooks and bad in everything.

The Behaviourists may look for the roots of a soured disposition in an unhappy married life: the Freudians in the somewhat wider field of sex frustration: but the Adlerians will more percipiently contend that censoriousness is probably a defence-mechanism acquired in youth against censure. Now in adulthood, the man still seeks to lay blame on others to prevent it falling on himself. Because this process is largely unconscious, the hypercritical person will defend himself and contest any such explanation. Such people are, as a rule, fully persuaded of their own unassailable righteousness.

For the psychiatrist, censoriousness springs from the guilt-complex. The child early discovers that when he is 'good' he is rewarded; when he is 'naughty' he is punished. He accepts this as the natural order of things, so that there emerges within him a mechanism which we call conscience, which sets up useful rules for escaping guilt and winning approval.

This explanation throws light upon the singular fact that the censorious person is prone to blame most severely in others, the very faults to which he himself is the most given.

Whatever may be the psychological explanation of the censorious personality, its cultivation is certainly fostered by certain occupations. The politician with no gift of silence, the pedagogue with no love for youth, and the parson with no sense of schism, all exemplify the point that arrogance, dogmatism and censoriousness are the occupational diseases of those who spend

their time improving the lives of others. To these three ancient cock-shys—the State, the School and the Church—may be added our modern prophets, whose wailing wall never lacks echoes in an atomic era. Shaw's influence has never been commensurate with his rumbustious personality; largely because of his hyper-acidity. A. P. Herbert is so much more pleasant a reformer than Wells because he smiles when he knocks our hat off. The pity is that if we must be put right, we can't have a popular philosopher less petulant than Joad; moralists less prissy than the religious broadcasters; playwrights less studiously astringent; teachers at least half as lovable as they are learned; and politicians who don't always elect to bowl like hell when the wicket is sticky.

(7) *Immoderation*

'Moderation is a fatal thing. Nothing succeeds like excess.'

OSCAR WILDE

Wilde's paradox borrows such point as it possesses from the simple fact that ever since the Greeks, who extolled temperance as the keystone of wisdom and virtue, there has been general agreement among normal people that immoderation is an unpleasant weakness. Lord Chatham had good occasion to write of this personality trait, 'moderation, which consists in an indifference about little things, and in prudent and well-proportioned zeal about things of importance, can proceed from nothing but true knowledge; which has its foundation in self-acquaintance'.

Immoderation, as the besetting sin of the enthusiast, is the pitfall for the extroverted temperament. The introvert is not immune, but his fervours run deeper and brawl less. It will occur to the reader at this point that over-enthusiasm is compatible with quite a



number of desirable qualities. It may express itself in any number of ways, but from the moment enthusiasm becomes unbalanced, it passes into immoderation, which always betrays itself and those caught up in its contagion. It may be nothing worse than the woman who, hearing that a thousand units of vitamin are good, proceeds to take ten thousand as being far far better. Or it may appear in the man who, believing that democracy is good, expects the millennium by extending the franchise.

The implicit fallacy behind immoderate theories is that we cannot have too much of a good thing. Temperance is a good thing, therefore we should have prohibition. Business is a good thing, so we should foster interlocking directorates and vast cartels the better to exploit the markets. It is a good thing, on Lord Chatham's showing, to make little of minor ills, therefore we should all espouse Christian Science. Peace is undoubtedly good, therefore let us have peace at any price. Independence and self-expression are most desirable, therefore our children should be subject to no constraints: the darlings must do exactly as they wish at all times and in all places. Government is a good and necessary thing, therefore we must nationalize everything. Amusement is good, so let us all, like Edward VII, demand that every waking hour be filled with distractions. Organization is good, therefore let everything and everybody be regimented, systematized and uniform. Trade Unionism is good, therefore we must make it compulsory, as it is in New Zealand. Co-operation is good, so all prices should be fixed and all wages standardized. Communication is a good thing, so let there be a telephone in every room, the radio always a-blare and animated conversation be incumbent upon all occasions.

If immoderate enthusiasm had its exuberant way, life would be intolerable. It makes a great many good things something less than desirable. Taken to such excess, the personality finds that its generosity becomes prodigality, its sociability spreads into intrusiveness, its self-improvement becomes a bore, its sports become an obsession, its health exaggerates into fanaticism, its wealth issues in vulgarity, and its strengths become its very weaknesses.

(8) *Hyper-sensitiveness*

‘A certain chronic irritability—a sort of Bostonitis—which, in its primitive Puritan forms, seemed due to knowing too much of his neighbours and thinking too much of himself.’<sup>1</sup>

Hyper-sensitiveness is an excess of the self-submissive sentiment, which as Henry Brooks Adams points out arises from an over-introverted temperament. We can indeed know too much of our neighbours and think too much of ourselves. In short our attitudes toward life may be altogether too personalized.

Strangely enough, hyper-sensitiveness has contrived its acceptance as a badge of quality—a mark of the fine-drawn spirit. Who shudders to hear himself described as a ‘most sensitive fellow—feels everything acutely’? Almost we feel a cut above duller clods who suffer so little. This is, of course, sheerest decadence.

Hyper-sensitiveness shows itself in an excessive concern as to the thoughts, opinions and reactions of others; an over-anxiety lest one’s conduct will arouse surprise, or shock, or laughter. To this type of personality, the appearance of things is all-important. T. S. Eliot sees such people as

‘Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;

<sup>1</sup> *The Education of Henry Adams*, H. B. Adams, Ch. 28.

Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse—  
Almost at times, the Fool.<sup>1</sup>

Because of this constant preoccupation with the reactions of others, this type of individual undermines his own confidence and independence. If he seeks advice, it is less that he may follow it than that he may find out in advance how he will appear to others. Over-concerned to please, he becomes fussy about trifles of deportment, dress, speech and manners. A reputation for great delicacy of feeling and refined sensibility, may mean nothing more than an elaborate defence-mechanism against conscious maladjustment. Ultimately such a man may become so engrossed with non-essentials as to lose the power of independent action. Hyper-sensitiveness may be an amiable enough weakness, but it can cut the nerve of effort and reduce one's personality to futility.

In business it may take a variety of forms. There is the man so agitated at the thought of adverse criticism that in the presence of superior authority he is abject. Ordway Tead comments on such an attitude with the suggestion that it is as common amongst male employees as amongst women: 'One successful department store in a large Eastern city is in charge of a man who is really admired by his employees. To this manager, who wants to run his store on genuinely democratic lines, the subservience of the workers is a constant source of irritation. In staff meetings he berates them roundly for their lack of initiative and aggressiveness. The spectacle of this employer belabouring the workers about their reluctance to assume leadership and responsibility is one to make the student of industrial psychology ponder deeply on the springs of action.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Love-song of J. Alfred Prufrock.*

<sup>2</sup> *Instincts in Industry.*

A good deal of this timidity due to hyper-sensitive-ness arises in the older methods of child-training, in which the youngster is compelled meekly to accept authority and quietly to do as he is told. By dictating a child's conduct in too much detail, parents come perilously near to destroying its initiative. Never a blow may be struck at the child's body, but over-solicitous supervision of its activities can easily create this praise-and-blame complex which later registers in hyper-sensitiveness.

Child pedagogy has passed through the stage of mild lunacy in which every control was regarded as a violation of the growing personality. That is to create a child with a whim of iron. Over-indulgence was a natural pendulum-swing after so many centuries of over-repression. The training of the young is currently at rest as between these extremes, the soft and the hard pedagogics.

The submissive tendency in a man's personality has its dangers no less than the assertive, and this holds true at all stages of development. A man's personality is determined, not a little, by his own opinion of himself. In the absence of a proper self-respect and self-confidence, any firm personality is impossible. On the other hand, the individual who has been constantly suppressed, or made over-deferential to the opinions of others, may make his compensation in a hyper-sensitiveness which may seem to be individuality, but is really nothing of the sort.

(9) *Insincerity*

'I want to see you shoot the way you shout.'

THEODORE ROOSEVELT, Feb., 1917

To seem, rather than to be; pretence than reality, would appear to need no condemnation. Yet when

our paradoxologists have to challenge popular conduct on this point as Wilde and Shaw have done so persistently, it appears that the case is not yet axiomatic.

Wilde said 'a little sincerity is a dangerous thing, and a great deal of it is absolutely fatal'.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary to note that he was writing of the delicate business of art-criticism, and we may as soon believe a woman or an epitaph as trust a critic. Shaw had a different sphere of deceit and dissimulation in mind when he wrote: 'It is dangerous to be sincere unless you are also stupid.'<sup>2</sup> He had an eye cocked at the devious ways of politics.

Are we, then, to conclude that the cynical outlook on life has rehabilitated insincerity and established it as indispensable to success?

Neither paradox purports to vindicate the insincerity which withholds honest opinion for its own advantage; which praises whilst it secretly condemns, admires where it feels but inward scorn, and flatters and suborns as an instrument of policy. The author of *Britannicus*, *St. Joan* and *The Apple Cart* would hardly be taken as an advocate for any sort of insincerity. His genial ferocities have on that score never abated.

There is here no defence of sham and humbug in whatever pleasant guise they may appear. Lack of candour does grave disservice to our friends, for they have a right to our opinion when it is sought. And it is our duty to them and to ourselves to hold an honest opinion, whether it be adverse or not.

Jung seeks to explain insincerity as a personality-trait by suggesting that self-interest may lead a man to adopt a false rather than a true persona among his fellows. If it pays to deceive, then he will deceive by

<sup>1</sup> *The Critic as an Artist.*  
*Maxims for Revolutionists.*

seeming to be other than he is. We have considered the mask of hypocrisy as distinct from the mask of the authentic person. It has been shown that the former pretends a virtue which it does not pursue, whereas the latter pursues the virtue by assuming it in the declared personality. Neither individual may at the moment possess the virtue, but where the sincere individual will in time acquire it, the hypocrite never will.

We clearly cannot become what we wish to be, merely by wishing, and still less by pretending, as an end in itself. The development of personality is by setting our aim always a little beyond our present attainment, and by so committing ourself in open declaration, compel our own conformity thereto.

The graduate admitted to the medical fraternity by examination and license may have taken the Hippocratic oath, and will have been carefully indoctrinated by the ideals of his chosen profession. But how can youth fall heir to the ages by mere instruction? Experience alone can make him intrinsically what he purports to be. Not till he has refused the seduction of easy money by unethical practice; not till he has passed through the fiery trial of professional mistake honestly made can his character be what his profession suggests it is. He begins by adopting the approved persona of the medical fraternity and must now conform thereto or forfeit his standing and his self-respect. That so few fail themselves and their society demonstrates the validity of assuming a character as the proper means of achieving it.

Every profession has its ethical standards to which each novitiate subscribes and into which he should grow. If insincerity appears to pay higher dividends he may be diverted, but if the universe is founded on justice and truth, such perversion must cost more than

it can hope to gain. So it would seem to be as prudent as it is proper to eschew insincerity.

(10) *Vanity*

‘Provided a man is not mad, he can be cured of every folly but vanity.’

ROUSSEAU

This is a personality-trait we can always discern in others, but never in ourselves; which classifies it as a species of madness.

As a rule, vanity attacks a man on his strongest point. It is only necessary to see that vanity is proper esteem taken too far, to understand it as another form of the Masculine Protest. Feeling that others may not fully appreciate our worth, we take to sounding our own virtues. Soon this pleasant feeling of fineness becomes what Carlyle calls ‘the sixth insatiable sense’.<sup>1</sup> Growing by what it feeds on, vanity presently becomes monstrous, and we are beyond redemption. We are addicts to this pernicious drug which stupefies sound judgement.

Exemplification can again best clarify the psychological processes by which a personality comes to such a pass.

It is not surprising, for instance, to discover that Lord Nelson was a vain individual. Because he had so little need to espouse his own case, however, the following story is, to say the least, most curious. It is recorded by John Wilson Croker in his researches into the life and times of the Duke of Wellington.<sup>2</sup>

Summoned to the Colonial Office in Downing Street, Wellington was shown into a small waiting-room, where he found a gentleman whom he recognized from his portraits and his missing arm, as Horatio Nelson.

<sup>1</sup> *The French Revolution*, Pt. i, Book 2, Ch. II.

<sup>2</sup> *Correspondence and Diaries*.

The latter could not know Wellington, for they had never met, and this was before the Peninsular Campaign. So far as Nelson knew, the ensuing conversation was with an unknown stranger. Wellington's account of it is this:

'He spoke in a style so vain and silly as to surprise and disgust me almost. The conversation was almost all on his side and all about himself. Some remark of mine must have made him guess that I was somebody, for he left the room for a moment, I have no doubt to ask the office keeper who I was, for when he came back he was an altogether different man, both in manner and matter. All that I had thought a charlatan style had vanished, and he talked of the state of this country and of affairs on the Continent with good sense. In fact he now talked like an officer and a statesman.

'Had the Secretary of State admitted Lord Nelson in the first quarter hour I should have taken away the impression of a light and trivial character which other people have found in Nelson. But luckily I saw the other side of this very superior man. A more sudden or complete metamorphosis I never saw.'

This incident conforms to a familiar pattern. Nelson, of frail and insignificant physique, finds himself in the company of an unknown soldier of magnificent presence and commanding air. What more natural than that his sense of physical inferiority should betray him into a display of vain conversation?

Lytton Strachey has, however, overturned enough of our national pedestals. There is no intention even were there possibility of demolishing Trafalgar Square and its Monument. It is just a little difficult to determine where vanity is the more surprising, in the distinguished, who thereby make themselves incongruous; or in the undistinguished, who merely render themselves ridiculous.



Wordsworth had worn years before on a similar occasion. Moxon the publisher had hard work to make the dress fit the author of *The Excursion*, but by pulling and hauling, they got him encased at the last.<sup>1</sup> The psycho-analysts will find here the pattern of feticism, and the anthropologists a suggestive hint of acquired mania. But whatever the poet's reason may have been for wearing another's clothes, the incident must now be contrasted with another which occurred one evening at the Oxford and Cambridge Club.<sup>2</sup>

Tennyson was dining with George Venables, Frank Lushington and several lesser lights, and in the smoke-room, he insisted on putting his feet on the table, tilting back his chair *more Americano*. There were strangers present and his host expostulated at these bad manners. 'Put your feet down,' he asked, but the poet replied: 'Why should I? I'm comfortable as I am.' Someone else suggested that people were staring. 'Let them stare,' said Tennyson placidly. There was a painful silence till someone, a profound if unwitting psychologist, said quietly: 'Alfred, people will think you are Longfellow.' Down went the feet immediately.

None of us are exempt from vanity. The best that we can hope for is to keep it out of sight, for as Shakespeare assures us: 'It is not vainglory for a man and his glass to confer in his own chamber.'<sup>3</sup> Byron must have agreed, because every night whilst he was at Cambridge, he put his hair in curlers. When detected, he did have the grace to say: 'Don't let the cat out of the bag, my dear Scrope, for I am as vain of my curls as a girl of sixteen.'

Oscar Levant maintains most discursively that all

<sup>1</sup> *Victoria Regina*, Fitzgerald Molloy.

<sup>2</sup> *Random Recollections*, Charles H. E. Brookfield.

<sup>3</sup> *Cymbeline*, Act IV, Sc. 1.

musicians are vanity-mad. His lengthy associations with George Gershwin must have been a sore trial to each of them, for this Boswell is not one whit behind his Johnson. He says it all in *My Life—or the Story of George Gershwin*.

‘An evening with Gershwin was invariably a Gershwin evening. There were recurrent, lengthy references to his piano-playing, his composing, his conducting, his painting; marcato monologues in *allabreve* which George’s audience absorbed with the fascinated attentiveness of a Storm-trooper listening to one of Hitler’s well-modulated firehouse chats.

‘Finally there was a Luftpause, and I inquired: “Tell me, George, if you had to do it all over, would you fall in love with yourself again?”’<sup>1</sup>

I yield gracefully to Mr. Levant. That is the definitive quip on vanity.

#### SUMMARY

The ego-sentiment has been described as the Führer principle of the personality. Its expression is always a betrayal when it is unrestricted and undisciplined.

The ego-urge is basic in human nature and indispensable to positive achievement, but it is subject to aberrations against which every man must erect his own safeguards.

Egoism we have seen to be the regarding of the self as the centre of everything. Egotism is the expression of this master-sentiment, and lies in self-commendation and self-exaltation.

Confining the analysis to those whom it may concern, the chapter proceeds to analyse for their psychological origins those defects of personality which express egotistical traits.

<sup>1</sup> *A Smattering of Ignorance*, p. 170.

These have been taken seriatim; false modesty, which we have submitted is pride aping humility; monomania, which turns out to be a pathological determination to hold the centre of the stage at all costs; self-importance, which can be dismissed as pomposity; dogmatism, the darling daughter of ignorance; officiousness, a back-to-childhood characteristic; censoriousness, the opinion of weeds about flowers; immoderation, which discredits itself as well as the things it exaggerates; hyper-sensitiveness, which we have seen becomes as touchy as a time-bomb; insincerity, which writes false price-tags; and vanity, which, loving itself, has no rivals.

Working on the perhaps unwarranted assumption that there may be a reader or two with spirit sufficiently chastened to treat the Questionnaire as personally applicable, a Rating-key is now submitted.

After the severity of the text, the Questionnaire will be found to be almost light-hearted.

#### THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Four questions have been asked around the personality-traits reviewed in the chapter, with the single exception of 'monomania' for reasons which will be fairly clear from the text itself.

Thus there are thirty-six questions set out under the following framework:

I: FALSE MODESTY	V: CENSORIOUSNESS
II: SELF-IMPORTANCE	VI: IMMODERATION
III: DOGMATISM	VII: HYPER-SENSITIVENESS
IV: OFFICIOUSNESS	VIII: INSINCERITY

#### IX: VANITY

It would require an almost superhuman detachment and objectivity of mind to acknowledge in oneself the

faults of this chapter. Even were the questions answered before reading the text of the chapter, it would be apparent that the testee was making damaging admissions. If the reader can support the idea of submitting the more revealing questions to the decision of an independent observer he may come closer to the truth. But in any case, the following answer-key may be used as a basis for some conclusions:

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
1 yes	1 yes	1 yes	1 no	1 yes	1 yes	1 yes	1 yes	1 yes
2 yes	2 yes	2 yes	2 yes	2 yes	2 yes	2 yes	2 yes	2 yes
3 yes	3 yes	3 yes	3 no	3 yes	3 yes	3 yes	3 yes	3 yes
4 no	4 yes	4 yes	4 yes	4 yes	4 yes	4 B	4 yes	4 no

The above key-answers indicate the maximum of each personality-trait under review, so that it will be apparent that the reader may assess his tendency to the various forms of egotism by the proportion of affirmative answers he returns.

Of the thirty-six questions, for the thoroughly degenerate individual, thirty-one would receive 'yes' answers, and four would have 'no' answers. If the reader finds that there are in his Questionnaire less than twenty affirmatives, he can relax. More than that would at least acquit him of dishonesty, for he has thereby sworn away his character.

With a preponderance of negative answers, the testee may be able to locate his weakness wherever affirmatives creep in.

But it must be acknowledged that self-testing on so delicate a matter as egotism is doomed before it starts. If we suffer from its baneful influence we will be the last people to acknowledge it, even to ourselves.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### TO CHAPTER VIII

1. *Do you find yourself prone to exaggeration?* .....
2. *Is your temper easily provoked?* .....
3. *Are you enthusiastic rather than lethargic?* .....
4. *Do you feel yourself perturbed and angry when listening to views and opinions with which you strongly disagree?* .....
5. *Are you excitable?* .....
6. *Do you find it easy and natural to be affectionate?* .....
7. *Do you manifest a strong disposition to be cheerful or depressed? i.e. do you tend to extremes?* .....
8. *Are you subject to strongly marked moods?* .....
9. *Are you a 'worrier'?* .....
10. *Do you tend to be markedly imaginative? \** .....
11. *Have you a developed æsthetic feeling? i.e. are you fond of music, art, etc.?* .....
12. *Have you a sense of humour of the boisterous sort? i.e. do you enjoy hearty laughter?* .....
13. *Is it natural and easy for you to be enthusiastic?* .....
14. *Are you sensitive, easily hurt, and prone to brood?* .....
15. *Are you aroused by injustice?* .....
16. *Are you fond of animal pets, enjoying fondling and playing with them?* .....

17. *Are you dogged by a deep feeling of discontent and dissatisfaction with life in general?* .....
18. *Are you particularly interested in sense pleasures? i.e. those of food and drink and sex?* .....
19. *Do you read a good deal of romantic literature? i.e. novels with intimate personal revelations?* .....
20. *Do you blush easily and register inner embarrassment in evident ways?* .....
21. *Do you find it necessary to repress your emotional feelings? i.e. are you denied reasonable outlets for your interests and enthusiasms and satisfactions?* .....
22. *Do you tend to panic in emergency?* .....
23. *Are you conscious of inner feelings of fear of your employer, your fellow-employees or of failure in your work?* .....
24. *Are you nervous in company?* .....
25. *Do you suffer from headaches for which there appears to be no organic cause?* .....
26. *Have you ever suffered from a 'nervous breakdown'?* .....
27. *Do you suffer from sleeplessness for which there is no organic cause such as pain, or bodily illness? i.e. from anxious sleeplessness?* .....
28. *Are you irritated and querulous? often to your own inner distress?* .....
29. *Do you suffer from heart trouble which your doctor says is not organic? i.e. there is no actual heart disease, but you still feel upset in this region?* .....
30. *Do you suffer from indigestion, or blood pressure, or any other kind of ill-health which your doctor characterizes as due to anxiety rather than bodily illness?* .....

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE EMOTIONS AND THE PERSONALITY

‘It is extraordinary how many emotional storms one may weather in safety, if one is ballasted with ever so little gold.’

WILLIAM MCFEE<sup>1</sup>

‘The world belongs to the Enthusiast who keeps cool.’

IBID

WHEN we come to the battlefield of theories about the emotions of mankind, we may despair in good company.

Professor F. C. Bartlett confessed that ‘the thoughtful expert is inclined to wonder whether psychology can ever be anything more than a sort of noisy dog-fight between conflicting theories’. However, since Montgomery and Alexander find profit in reading Napoleon’s theories of war, presumably we may scan these psychological battle-plans to some purpose.

Only a zombie can affect an indifference to human emotions, for these are the basis of our daily motivation. What we are, what we tend to do, and how we go about doing it are all conditioned by our emotional dispositions. On H. G. Wells’s reading of the future, there’s at least an even chance that humanity will ultimately become a race of zombies: but meantime we continue to possess what these horrific creatures are said to lack—emotion and personality.

At every moment of life we are doing something, even when like the storied negro we only ‘sit’. Even

<sup>1</sup> *Casuals of the Sea.*

in sleep, the processes of respiration and circulation, digestion and assimilation proceed automatically; and even these physiological, fundamental functions are directly affectable by emotional changes.

From the repertoire of our conscious abilities and activities we are constantly selecting some one pattern of behaviour as appropriate to the moment. There are certain identifiable factors which influence this selection of behaviour. These factors we define as motives, and they afford us a natural starting-point in our discussion of the emotions.

#### MOTIVATION

When G. P. R. James came to sum up his volume on Cardinal Richelieu he said: 'Turning over a page or two of the book of Nature, I found that the most brilliant actions and the greatest events were generally brought about from the meanest motives.'

Like the man who could never think of the word 'butterfly' without thinking also of 'wheel', we can scarcely consider the word 'motive' without its cliché-accompaniment of 'ulterior'. The personality does not customarily confess its motives, even to itself, so that any introspective analysis is fraught with those difficulties with which we are now familiar.

Our motives may be described as the General Staff of the personality; the strategists who find reasons for our actions. The metaphor holds in extension. Just as the private soldier is seldom able to identify the brass-hats of the army brains-trust, so the individual is seldom aware of the identity of these compelling urges we call variously the 'instincts', 'attitudes' and 'emotions'. They may guide our destinies, but we find no need to know them very well.

Then too, just as it is no longer true of the lowly



ranker that he 'is not paid to think', so it is no longer true to say that 'mulling over one's inner thoughts and feelings drives one into the jungle of the unconscious'. If all the springs of actions were understood we might conceivably make a greater success of life. Could we but codify our emotional reactions, we would not need to think of the world as a place 'where so much is to be done and so little is known'. Were all the factors involved in making decisions perceived beforehand, we would be better able to eliminate our habitual errors and omissions. 'While folly asks the why and wherefore' may be funny as an epitaph for the late King of the Sandwich Isles, but it is scarcely adequate as a philosophy of life.

#### NEEDS AND WANTS

'Necessity has no law—except to conquer.'

PUBLILIUS SYRUS

Enthusiastic debaters can be found to take the negative in every conceivable proposition except this, that 'Man must eat, drink, defecate, and sleep'. These are the minimal needs of mankind. A man's wants are his personal idea of satisfying his needs. Both needs and wants are governed by emotions, for with every primal instinct goes the accompanying emotion of desire. That a man's wants are seldom identical with his needs is but human nature, but that his wants are many while his needs are few is unfortunate for human happiness. For we universally measure our happiness by our freedom from felt and unfulfilled wants.

We have been described so often by the economic determinists as being creatures of necessity, that we have largely forgotten how few our needs really are. What are they? The physiological needs are food,

drink, shelter, clothing and rest. If we were only physical machines; merely an elegant assembly of human plumbing; a thirty-feet length of mucous membrane connecting the fundamental orifices of salivation, parturition and excretion—then our physiological needs would be our only wants. Food, foetus and faeces would encompass the gamut of human requirements.

Because we are psychological and social creatures besides, we have enlarged our wants both in number and diversity till they bear no visible relation to physiological needs. This is of great consequence to the emotional life, bound up as it is with the satisfaction of these innumerable wants. Drink is a physical need, but our wants embrace everything from Bacardi to root beer. Food is a need, but the table d'hôte must run from soup to savoury. Clothing is sometimes a need, but we make it a compulsion to be in the glass of fashion and the mould of form. Shelter is a need, but a man so designs his house that as Emerson says: 'Now he has a master, and a task for life; he is to furnish, watch, show it, and keep it in repair the rest of his days.'

Which, of course, is all very good for business, for it is to satisfy our artificial wants that we have built this panjandrum called 'civilization'. On one view, this is the price of personality. Tolstoy argued that the price was too high, and that by pampering human personality with such a fanfaronade, we have not enriched life so much as made it all appetite and ostentation. But asceticism is possible only for those who have stifled all emotional life and become a good deal less than normal men. If these lovers of the simple life had, as servicemen, lived on Spam and Carter's Spread and dehydration's dubious delights, they might

have developed a healthy appreciation for sirloin and dairy butter and fresh-cut frills.

Nevertheless, it is a useful thought that it is not necessary to commission our desires and wants as Simon Legrees—whip in hand and all.

The biological needs which so excite our emotions and so dominate our personality are instinctive appetites; and there are only six of them: hunger, thirst, elimination, rest, change and sex. These are imperious necessities, the basic requirements of the good life. It will not do to say that they are bodily needs, for we have long ago abandoned any such artificial distinctions. These are the needs of the human being as a psychophysico-social organism. Our motives revolve around their satisfaction. When we have these things our morale is good. In their deprivation lies clamant hunger.

Idyllically, there should be enough to satisfy these needs, and there probably is. But there never will be sufficient to satisfy everybody's wants; someone else always has what we want. Which provokes emotional reactions of varying intensity. This fundamental distinction as between needs and wants must be kept in mind in any survey of the emotions. It is our wants and not our needs which create the fever of our acquisitive society. The pathological love of accumulation is occasioned when needs are forgotten in the multitude and plenitude of our wants.

We are not in this game of grab very long before we encounter the rules. Each society has its own, and woe betide the man who proposes to satisfy his wants without deference to the regulations. There are peculiar and painful penalties attaching the unauthorized satisfaction of the biological urges. Resolution of this conflict between the individual wants and the social

sanctions is the main business of the personality. It is thus that we reach an equilibrium with our environment.

Let it be cheerfully admitted that there is often no better reason for satisfying the appetites in the approved fashion and at the prescribed times, than mere convention. But I write for the dispassionate public, not the passionate pagan.

#### SEXUAL NEEDS AND WANTS

'It has taken God—or Nature if we will—unknown millions of years of painful struggle to evolve Man and to raise the human species above that helpless bondage to reproduction which marks the lower animals.'

HAVELOCK ELLIS

A not inconsiderable body of novelists, poets and psychologists chooses to consider sex as the fountain-head of all motivation. Those of us who perforce lived through the war years in compulsory abstention from sex satisfaction will on that view wonder what sustained us over those lean years. So long as a man lives within the normal cycle of urgency and repletion, it is arguable that sex in its widest connotation supplies the main drive for all his strivings. But throughout history there have been extended periods when accommodating nature banks these fires, yet keeps up a fair head of steam on others. This process has been given the mystical title of 'sublimation', which will have attention in its place.

Sexual needs and wants are by all reports increasingly disruptive elements in modern society. It is commonly said that the cause of this ferment is that where healthy males are polygamous by inclination, decorous society is monogamous. So in the interests of the home and family as the basic units of society a

man's sexual wants must be made conformable with the rules. The incontinent soon learn that promiscuity drives a harder bargain than even respectability. But whatever course a man takes with his sexual urges, he is in for strained relations within his emotional life until he reaches some sort of equilibrium.

Again, by another of the myriad modern maladjustments of man within his society, the sex demands of nature are the most clamant at a time when their satisfaction is economically most difficult to achieve. We need sexual satisfaction long before most men can afford to marry. When this precocity of desire is not physiological, it is created psychologically by the ceaseless stimulation of sophisticated novels, faintly titillating films, bawdy conversation, and the disappearance of that venerable institution, the chaperon. Consequent to all these things, our emotional life is accelerated often beyond our financial accomplishment within the sanctioned limits.

From this emotional impasse comes much of the neuroticism of our time. Personality is not infrequently disbalanced in the 'teen age, going on to the emotional tension of the 'twenties'. If the youth reads what Freud said, and Jung meant to say, and what Prinzhorn might have meant if he could have said it intelligibly, he may well become a furtive sybarite. Or on the other hand, concluding miserably that he is under the sway of a lifelong desire to bump off his father in order to become his own stepfather; that he was a sex-drenched Rabelaisian before he could walk; and that his dream of a jet-propelled aircraft signifies his rapacious and dishonourable intentions toward that pretty girl he met yesterday—he may well despair of himself.

It is possible that the poor bedevilled subject of

psycho-analysis may come to believe that his illicit desires are in fact sanctioned in the more understanding circles. In that event his emotional rout will be complete, for he will go doggedly to the devil.

There is an alternative to all these turbulences. It lies in self-understanding. When needs and wants and emotional urges are seen in perspective; when the alternative outlets to a rich emotional life are perceived, man is not without his remedies. But adolescence and the stormy years of early manhood must be faced. I know of no completely satisfactory solution, within our present social framework and applicable to everybody. But such release as is available to us can be achieved only through the relief of inner emotional tension; and sex, despite the zealots, is but the part of the whole.

#### THE EMOTIONAL LIFE AS A WHOLE

'I perfectly feel, even at my finger's end.'

JOHN HEYWOOD

What are the emotions, that they can so complicate living? Without so much as stirring the ashes of the James-Lange versus Sherrington-Cannon dispute, suppose we watch the emotions at work.

The emotion itself can be described as an experience involving three factors (1) an external stimulus; (2) an organic sensation; and the (3) response, either manifest or latent. In plain language, an emotion is a function of the whole personality; sense-organ, bodily reaction, and mental awareness. In still plainer terms, emotions are our response to life.

Emotional experiences may be delightful or devastating, creative or chaotic, exhilarating or exhausting, constructive or the contrary. But they cannot by their nature, be vapid or characterless. Emotions are

always a conscious and disturbing experience. They can actually be measured by laboratory methods. We may express them or inhibit them, control or repress them, direct or sublimate them. But we cannot ignore them. They are the feeling Self. We can no more ignore emotions than a nagging tooth. Both are a matter of nerve-ends.

#### CORTEX AND THALAMUS

The medicos explain that the seat of the intellect is in the linked-up cells of the 'grey matter'—the cortex of the cerebral hemisphere. The seat of the emotions is in the underlying brain-stem where groups of nerve-cells constitute the thalamus and the hypo-thalamus. Through these two organs, nerve-fibres stream upwards to penetrate the convoluted cortex and on downwards to activate the muscles into appropriate movement.

By this sequence, these overlords, the cortical thinking-centres, try to keep themselves informed as to what goes on in the common-room where the emotions originate—the thalamus. Accordingly, in our emotional experiences we are not dominated by a totalitarian dictator. The cortex can control the thalamus; we can control our emotions if we 'put our mind to it'. Otherwise there would be nothing to withhold elemental passions. Oscar Wilde's notice 'Don't shoot the pianist—he's doing his best' is an appeal to the cortex as against the thalamus.

It sometimes happens, however, when feelings run high, that the thalamus takes the bit between its teeth so to speak, and we are no longer rational creatures. Not a few of our regrets arise from such occasions.

On the other hand there are situations where it can be just as costly if the emotions fail to take charge. We have the thalamus to thank when in moments of

peril we wait not upon the order of our going. When danger arises, the signal comes through from the thalamus 'in clear'. There's no decoding necessary by the cortex. The heart quickens its beat, the adrenals pump out their secretions into the blood-stream, and the whole bodily resources are marshalled for flight. The Olympics would see real speed if the runners were chased instead of paced, and by hungry lions rather than toothless Time. By such a mechanism does Nature prove a very present help in time of trouble. Because the organic changes in a strong emotional experience assemble the invigorated activities into an instinctive reaction, it is the sabre-toothed tiger and not the human race which is extinct.

The organic part of the emotion is evident in skin pallor or flush, perspiration, shivering and staring eye. If the experience is complete, the stimulus, organic sensation and the action in succession complete the emotional cycle. The making of personality is substantially the problem of co-ordinating the emotional life.

#### MEASURING THE EMOTIONS

These symptoms of the inner emotion are not the only methods by which the experience can be observed. The psycho-galvanic reflex (p.g.r.)—the elicited response to a stimulus—cannot disclose the *nature* of the emotion roused, as do these bodily reactions. But it can reveal something about its intensity, and whether the individual truthfully describes his emotional experience.

The galvanometer consists of two non-polarisable electrodes fixed to different parts of the subject's body. When an electric current is passed between them and through the body, the change of resistance consequent upon inner emotional stress causes a difference of



potential which deflects the galvanometer needle. This is the familiar 'lie-detector' technique. A few associative words like 'kiss', 'Christmas', 'criterion' and 'collaborator' are spoken to the subject at intervals, and he is directed to write them down in order of their emotional impression upon him. Perhaps he will state that the first word affected him the most, the fourth least, and the other two in between. His statement is now compared with the amplitude of the galvanometer deflections, which are found to be respectively 40, 10, 30 and 70! Another traitor is self-convicted by his emotional reaction and the lying which went with it. If it but worked infallibly, the trial of criminals would present fewer problems. Thoreau once wrote: 'For an impenetrable shield, stand inside yourself'.<sup>1</sup> That was before the invention of the p.g.r.

The star salesman who in an important test by a professional psychologist utterly disappointed his manager, explained everything—especially his place at the bottom of the aptitude results—by saying dejectedly, 'my little girl is dying'. We cannot ignore the emotions in any evaluations of personality.

#### DISCIPLINING THE EMOTIONS

'Let onion atoms but lurk within the bowl  
And, only discreetly, animate the whole.'

Recipe for salad

The culinary arts—and those of beverage—are in several respects analagous to the making of personality. Much more than a soupçon of garlic or a dash of bitters is insufferable. The emotional flavour of personality is preferably a measured modicum. A good cocktail is a delicate combination of ingredients, each of which, but half-suspected, contributes an element of balance

<sup>1</sup> *Journal*.

and variety to a drink possessing an individual character all its own. One may have Angostura, another a Yellow Chartreuse and yet another a sprig of mint. Now it is Maraschino, now it is Grenadine and now it is Dubonnet. But always it is with a studied restraint, for these elements are the tang and the taste, not the body and the base. Without emotional liveliness, personality can degenerate into the flat and the nondescript. In excess, the emotions confuse and disorganize the temperament. They are meant to be under studied control and judicious expression. Then they enliven without vitiating the personality.

There has been enormous attention given to the collective control of emotion in wartime. Panic must be prevented in the community at all costs. Elaborate E.P.S. organization, dispersal drill, air-raid routine, and emergency services of all kinds were thrown up to combat undisciplined emotional behaviour by social groups. What is more, such measures have been signally successful. People showed a collective good sense unshaken by the worst of blitz-horrors. Never before has mankind been so widely and so thoroughly conditioned against mass fear and hysteria.

It should therefore be unnecessary to advance any lengthy argument to prove that emotional crises can be controlled; disciplined and canalized in the individual just as they have been in the community.

What preventive action against emotional storms is available to the individual as it has been effective in the mass? What is the personal equivalent of planned community control? Since a man is not one but many persons, and personality itself is a miniature community, the analogy is sound up to a point. The elder Oliver Wendell Holmes has said: 'Heredity is an omnibus in which all our ancestors ride; and every now

and then one of them puts out his head and embarrasses us.<sup>1</sup> Few of us realize how multitudinous our ancestry is. In ten generations—about 300 years—one's direct forebears number 1,024. The personality is thus a fairly commodious omnibus, and whether our emotional instability is inherited or not, there will always be occasion for embarrassment. Whence then is to come our personal emergency organization for the maintenance of self-discipline?

The answer is to be found in that system of habits which the more mystically-minded like to call Will-power. But we have already seen that we possess an instinctive as well as a planned capacity for emergency control. Willed habits are the amplest stopbank against emotional flooding, but instinct unaided achieves much. The animal who 'plays possum' despite taut nerves and pounding heart, the wild creature that 'freezes in its tracks' at the onset of an unlocated danger, are paradigms of the instinctive reaction of human emotion. We do not need to teach a man *how* to be afraid or angry or generous or curious or submissive or elated or disgusted or amorous. But he does need to know *when* to be these things. Nature makes us instinctively emotional, but it requires careful nurture to make us intelligently emotional. We learned to distinguish between unreasoning fury and righteous indignation. We learn when our emotional displays are merely infantile or unbalanced or unreasonable.

It is therefore stupid to exhort men not to be afraid, not to worry, not to panic. It is proper, however, to teach them those things that alone should be feared, or pondered, or fled. We have to learn to show the proper amount of the right emotion and on the appropriate occasion. Just what are these proportions it is

<sup>1</sup> *The Guardian Angel*, Ch. III.

for each man in his own society to determine. Within these limits are considerable variations as to emotional conventions. The Englishman may wonder at the hearty world of the Dominions, which permit 'every possible display of jocularly, from an affettuoso smile to a piano titter, or full chorus fortissimo'.<sup>1</sup>

Disciplining the emotions is necessary if only for the conservation of energy. As Professor G. Humphrey has expressed it so neatly: 'The man who is furious at breakfast when the porridge is cold, and furious after breakfast when his train is late, and furious in the train because the window is down, and so on throughout the day, is like a group that has fire-drill every quarter of an hour, or a nation that mobilizes for war every month.'<sup>2</sup>

#### REPRESSING THE EMOTIONS

'Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,  
But—why did you kick me downstairs?'

*The Panel*, Act I, Sc. I. JOHN P. KEMBLE

A repressed emotion may take one of three courses. It may be completely extinguished; or driven underground into the unconscious; or sublimated. If it is extinguished we've heard the last of it; if it is sublimated we've made the best of it; but if it lurks in the unconscious we've made the worst of it. It may be a powder train to later explosions. Nervous breakdown comes to a mind no longer able to contain its repressions.

War and its aftermath, it goes without saying, have enormously increased the problem of making the best of repressed emotions. Heightened and accelerated stresses have created personal issues of the first magnitude. These emergent periods have been creating

<sup>1</sup> *The Contrast*, Act V, Sc. I, by Royall Tyler.

<sup>2</sup> *The Story of Man's Mind*, p. 216.

such tangled situations since the Thalassic period. The ten million fighting men found the repression of their emotional cycle not the least of war's costs, as every mail-censor knows by his official intrusions.

At the other end of this chain of circumstances, the womenfolk endured emotional stresses no less exacting. In a young fiancée it is too much to expect a resignation so heroic and an aloofness from social life so impenetrable as to be unimpeachable even by the poison-pen. The young wife was in worse part. Her fuller yet equally starved emotional needs were exacerbated by the cares of a small-child family, straitened finances and the lack of domestic help. For her there were no convivial innocences, for the merciless public mind readily believes the worst; and it must be admitted that the easy way out was not taken only by the few. In such a witches' broth, that so many at both ends of the chain survived the tension can but vindicate the basic goodness and decency of human nature in the worst of plights.

The moralists are always exercised by what they are pleased to interpret as a sign of modern degeneracy. The fortitude and resilience of human nature is at least as worthy of their confidence as is original sin. With sweet reasonableness, Mr. Pickwick understood things better. 'We know, Mr. Weller—we who are men of the world—that a good uniform must work its way with the women, sooner or later.'<sup>1</sup> Our emotions are characteristically errant, and it has already been said that repressing them but makes the worst of them.

Marital anxieties are only part of the whole emotional picture during a war. In the curious pattern of the Pacific campaign our men had sometimes to fly types of aircraft deemed, rightly or wrongly, to be dangerous,

<sup>1</sup> *Pickwick Papers*, Ch. XXXVII.

yet were compelled to keep silent lest they be branded a 'waverer' and grounded as 'lacking moral fibre'. Such service exigencies can do odd things to a man's personality. The minor lunacies of the military caste-system, the frustration of paper-work and remote-control, the abnegation of all æsthetic values, and the brooding sense of futility which hangs over the boredom of so much military service were long ago catalogued by C. E. Montague.<sup>1</sup> It is not necessary to qualify all this by saying for the nth time that service has its fine compensation and that for the rest of his life a man can be proud of his small part in the common sacrifice of such values. That and a great deal more will be said in books of another character. I am here occupied with the emotional problems contingent upon such wartime dislocations; and the incidental gains cannot offset the incalculable losses to the personality of such prolonged thwarting of the æsthetic and emotional life.

Since war on all fronts is ninety per cent boredom, the net result for most men and women is a 'bottled-up' emotional condition. That fighting men under such conditions achieve nobility and grandeur is because there are occasional bursts of activity in which the pent-up self is given salutary release. In between, there is always the saving sense of humour. Men still contrive to be born with the gift of laughter, and a sense that the world is mad. I know that my copies of A. A. Milne, A. P. Herbert, Stephen Leacock and Ogden Nash were extensively borrowed. Every Mess had its dog-eared copies of *Punch* and the *New Yorker*. There is doubtless something reprehensible in being amused on active service, but I mind a series of Quonset towns dotted variously throughout the Pacific pasted

<sup>1</sup> *Fiery Particles and Disenchantment.*

up with typed copies of Ogden Nash's 'Don't grin or you'll have to bear it', and A. P. Herbert's 'Let's be Glum'. If ever the history of the morale-services comes to be written, there should be an honoured place for our humorists. The psychological release of laughter, in replacing an ugly emotion by a harmless, has taught us all much about the business of emotional control.

If, now that it is all over, protracted repression breaks out into unsanctioned channels, we can scarcely be surprised. It has always happened in the past, and men still live in high hopes of drawing out what they have had to bank. If for long years men and women have found neither time nor place for emotional release, we must expect the aneroid to be set for 'Change'.

#### SUBLIMATING THE EMOTIONS

'If the ship be troubled with rats, place a good deal of dry newspapers in the sail locker for the rats to chew on.'

*Standard Seamanship*

As originally coined by Freud, the term 'sublimation' designated the unconscious process of deflecting the energy of the sexual impulse toward new objects or aims of a non-sexual and socially-useful nature. By later and wider application, the word is employed for any process by which compelling but obstructed urges are re-directed into alternative channels.

Sublimation is therefore an alternative to repression, which is always a damaging affair. But it can only be effected for instincts whose naturalness and propriety are recognized. Sublimation moves upwards, not downwards. It is not applicable to the man with a way with babies who goes into the kidnapping business. When for any reason the sex-instinct and its emotions cannot be expressed, sublimation proposes that their

energies be directed into social service or works of mercy or healthful sport.

The process may be unconscious or deliberate. Unconscious sublimation has a classic illustration in the life of Florence Nightingale, when she turned from marriage to the career of nursing. It is no animadversion to quote the fact that because of her emotional frustrations she was, until Nature no longer troubled her, a veritable termagant. There is a possible alternative to this reading of her celebrated personality. Anyone who has watched the military mind will agree that for Miss Nightingale to implant therein any new idea would require panzer qualities.

The second type—conscious sublimation—is exemplified in the many famous books written in prison cells. To combat the solitariness of durance, these writers redirected their energies into literary protests.<sup>1</sup> Indeed *Mein Kampf* marks the turning-point in the transformation of a back-street agitator into a modern Caesar. Bunyan in his 'close and uncomfortable' cell wrote at least four books as well as making tagged laces for the support of his family. Had Adolph Hitler, during his incarceration, read Bunyan's bedside book—Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*—the world might have had considerably less of him and of them. And had he, like Bunyan, played the flute in jail, he might not later have so played the fool. But there it is:

'Two men looked out of prison bars;  
The one saw mud, and the other the stars.'

In less portentous personalities the same process may be observed. The man who would like to have been a famous general contents himself with marshalling the

<sup>1</sup> Tyndale's translations of Holy Writ; Bunyan's *Profitable Meditations*, *Grace Abounding*, *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War*; More's *Utopia*; Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*; Raleigh's *History of the World*.



facts and figures as a cost accountant; another who all his life has yearned to do blindfolded backward somersaults on a tightrope, becomes a virtuoso of the gong, tam-tam, bass drum and glockenspiel. The fellow who has been bullied by the boss goes home to his tool-shed and takes it out on the topsoil.

#### INHIBITING THE EMOTIONS

‘ You praise their firm restraint,  
I’m with you there of course:  
They use the snaffle and the curb all right,  
But where’s the bloody horse? ’

ROY CAMPBELL<sup>1</sup>

It is a characteristic ‘upper-class’ English trait, sedulously imitated in impressionable circles, to deprecate all show of emotion. The resultant is a desiccation of personality which has to be encountered to be believed. Having brought the technique of emotional inhibition to incredible finesse, this type regards all emotion as bourgeois and unmannerly.

For different reasons, moralists and intellectuals also regard emotion askance; the former as a mark of earthy weakness, and the latter as a mark of decadence.

To nations who have no aristocracy by birth, and who pretend few intellectuals, this repression of all emotion appears to be the psychical equivalent of the Chinese custom of foot-binding and the mis-handled skulls of the Flat-head Indians. But where the heathen Chinese and the aboriginal Indian must create their aristocratic conventions, self-maiming ill-becomes the proclaimed flower of the human species. With his taxidermic art, John Galsworthy has embalmed these curious personalities in the Forsyte novels, where they appear appropriately incredible. In the British Dominions, New Zealand not excepted, there is,

<sup>1</sup> *Some South African Novelists.*

however, a marked disposition among the aspiring to ape this perversion of the emotions. We should be closer to the essentials of vigorous personality.

C. E. Montague has an altogether persuasive passage which suggests by its lovely overtones the true emotional sensibility: 'Among the mind's powers is one that comes of itself to many children and artists. It need not be lost, to the end of his days, by anyone who has ever had it. This is the power of taking delight in a thing, or rather in anything—everything: not as a means to some other end, but just because it is what it is, as the lover dotes on whatever may be the traits of the beloved object. A child in the full health of his mind will put his hand flat on the summer turf, feel it, and give a little shiver of private glee at the elastic firmness of the globe.

'All dullness is in the mind; it comes out thence and diffuses itself over everything round the dull person, and then he terms everything dull, and thinks himself the victim of the impact of dull things. In stupid rich people, in boys and girls deadeningly taught at dead-alive schools, in all disappointed weaklings and in declining nations, this loss of power to shed anything but dullness upon what one sees and hears is common enough.'<sup>1</sup>

Apart altogether from their pearly prose, these paragraphs indict a disposition which seems to be peculiar to British temperaments—we may hope to the comparatively few. For were this character widespread among us, we might start looking over our shoulder for the nations which will act as our pall-bearers. But happily, the 'common people' who have been the glory of embattled England, have no such shame of their emotions, no such dullness of the mind. Such people have remained stubbornly dry-eyed through the worst

<sup>1</sup> *Disenchantment*, Ch. XV.

blitz, stonily surveying the rubble of their homes and the loss of a life's savings; only to cheer their Majesties with warmth, and applaud Churchill in unaffected enthusiasm. They have not found it necessary to adopt a blasé world-weariness to armour themselves against adversity. The sheer ennui of living has not claimed these who will always be the salt of the earth.

Pity for the nation's West Ends might appear singularly misplaced, but in their dedicated dullness they are more to be pitied than copied. In their unashamedly rich emotional life our East Ends are more natural, in both the biological and the colloquial meanings of the term.

The studied inhibition of all emotion leads proximately to a devitalized personality, and ultimately to sheer atrophy. In circles where this is *à la mode*, an immaculate unemotionalism prescribes ennui, boredom and dilettantism as the approved persona. Moving among such types, there is little wonder that Ribbentrop so confidently reported Britain to the Führer as decadent and rotten-ripe for harvest. Certain of these languid ones were to thrust the words down his throat by the splendour of their war service, for just as Oliver Lyttleton was the only member of his public-school form to survive the Great War, so the old school tie has been borne through this war at great loss and with considerable distinction. But if these men were good soldiers it could only be by coming closer to the common clay of which good men anywhere are compounded. Porphyry vases have been known to be useful as well as ornamental, but the healthier British personality chooses an undoctored emotional life. In loving life, it can in turn be loved of life.

Let who will, specialize in the curb and bit and snaffle. A nation resurgent will prefer to have the

horse at hand gallop rather than gelded in his corn-fed stall. With all their possible embarrassments, let us have the colour and vitality and richness of emotional life rather than a cultivated anæmia of the personality. It is possible to have a considerate self-control without an emasculate depersonalization of the self.

The equally historic Gallic peoples still cherish the arts and zest of living, their veins not of marble but of pulsing blood. And this youngest of our Commonwealth family contrives to bear its lusty feelings without undue outrage to decorum. In a people still virile, the inhibition of all emotion has an inconsiderable contribution to any manifest destiny.

#### UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTIONS

‘In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing back the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused; Mrs. Partington’s spirit was up. But I need not tell you that the contest was unequal; the Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington.’

SYDNEY SMITH in a speech at Taunton, 1813

It has been confessed that occasionally our emotional storms get the better of us. The ultimate consequences of this defeat can be discerned in the study of sick minds whose illness is properly an emotional disbalance.

A vast number of sick people have no definite bodily disease to account for their illness. ‘Ill-health may arise from long-standing dissatisfactions in the business, social or home life of the individual. This failure of adjustment to environment is manifested by a disturbance in some parts of the personality, either as bodily symptoms of various kinds, capable of mimicking almost any disease; or as affections of the spirit resulting

in attacks of anxiety, obsessions, phobias, depressions and other disturbances of mood.

‘If a person can find an outlet for emotional tension by word or action, the body seems to find a means of expressing this tension through a kind of “organ language”. Nausea, in the absence of organic disease, sometimes means that a patient cannot “stomach” this or that environmental factor. Frequently a feeling of oppression in the chest, accompanied by sighing respirations, again in the absence of organic findings, indicates that the patient has “a load on his chest” that he would like to get rid of by talking about his problems.’<sup>1</sup>

In much the same way, it appears, though heart ailments are common enough, the majority of people who have symptoms in the heart region do not have organic disease. It is simply that the popular belief is that the heart is the seat of the emotions, and so we make it a conscious focal point for our anxieties, and the body accommodates our imagination. Perhaps the thalamus laughs to find the heart its scapegoat! At all events, heart neurosis arises in persons who carry an unusual emotional upset, and because the heart is thought to be the offender, it is there that the personality registers its disfunction. In time, these merely psychic factors may actually bring on a physical breakdown of the heart-functions by adding needlessly to that already burdened organ’s difficulties. The mind betrays the body with troubles not its own.

Similarly, psychic factors play an important part in certain types of blood pressure. By his emotional storms, the plethoric individual blows up himself as well as his victims. The abdomen too, long known as the ‘sounding board’ of the emotions, adds its quota

<sup>1</sup> *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Weiss and English.

of reflex troubles. Every student knows the loss of appetite and the 'bowels-turned-to-water' condition before examinations. The business man may get his indigestion, heartburn or nausea in connexion with important conferences, or through worrying about impending financial reverses. The worrisome wife develops indigestion and constipation, and the child who is more than ordinarily unhappy at school may have an attack of vomiting round about school-time.

In all such cases, the contest is unequal. The Atlantic Ocean defeats Mrs. Partington, despite her bucket and mop. The resources for stemming the tide of emotional flood are not sufficient. The individual becomes 'sick' either in mind or in body, and possibly both.

Other medical authority goes so far as to suggest that many patients have digestive symptoms due to personality disorders *before* they develop organic diseases of the digestive tract. Clinical experience shows that peptic ulcers are frequently conditioned by nervousness, fatigue and anxiety, which have been named as the greatest detectable causes of recurrent attacks.

Again it is commonly held that the entire respiratory system is profoundly influenced by the emotions. Many nocturnal attacks of bronchial asthma are preceded characteristically by anxiety dreams. Insomnia is frequently encountered as a symptom of emotional tension. Unless sleeplessness is caused by pain or organic disease, it is considered by medicos to be neurotic in origin. Headache is, of course, the most common symptom of humanity, and here again, lacking organic cause, it is regarded as a reflex of emotional stress, whether such be conscious or otherwise.

From all of which we conclude that the understanding of the emotions is of the utmost importance

to a balanced and healthy personality. The emotions are the gauleiters of the Self. They are ours for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, till death us do part. There need be little surprise that Thomas Mann can write: 'The understanding of the emotions is the inviolable condition of life.'<sup>1</sup>

#### DIRECTING THE EMOTIONS

'Who is to Bell the cat? It is easy to propose impossible remedies.'

ÆSOP'S FABLES

Leaving now the maimed and the halt, and returning to the normal personality in its tendency to encompass its own rout by indulging emotional upsets, we may ask what are the types of problems to be faced, and how can they be resolved in advance of physical concomitants?

For the most part, our personality disturbances are associated with the urges of sex, fear and anger, and nervousness.

#### (a) *The Emotional problems of Sex*

Because of its turbulence and irrationality, the instinct of reproduction has gained for itself a peculiar emphasis in modern society. There is for mankind no convenient apparatus of rut and heat to organize its expression in season only, and within physiological limits. Consequently, of all the animals, man alone makes love at all times. The best that society can do to bell this cat is to brand it as a predatory urge and hedge it round with the conventional restrictions of marriage.

This may be a working compromise with Nature, but it is impossible to pose it as a solution of the contingent emotional problems. As has been said, marriage waits upon financial factors to which our emotional urges will

<sup>1</sup> *The Magic Mountain*, Ch. V.

not defer. Bertrand Russell has inveighed at considered length about its shortcomings, so that between the belted Earl, Leon Blum, D. H. Lawrence, Havelock Ellis and Ethel Mannin, the hardy reader may canvass the whole wrathful protest against orthodox marriage.

If we are to believe the sprightly Shaw, the marital state is quite the most licentious of all human institutions, creating more emotional complexes than it solves. It simply affords the maximum of opportunity with the minimum of temptation, a system intolerable to emotional liveliness. But the all-over pattern of marriage can scarcely be as intractable as that. Should the normal individual act as Shaw implies, he speedily reaches love's sad satiety. Sheer physical and emotional exhaustion precludes the degeneration our St. Bernard predicates, if only by the law of diminishing returns, which operates in the emotional sphere with the same ineluctability and inflexibility as in economics.

These emotional difficulties are sometimes dismissed in a kind of forlorn hopelessness. H. L. Mencken has no faith in any kind of bell for such a cat. 'Who are the happy in marriage?' he asks, and supplies his answer. 'Those with so little imagination that they cannot picture a better state, and those so shrewdly resigned that they prefer quiet slavery to hopeless rebellion.'<sup>1</sup> This pessimism has breathed somewhat less heavily in other writers. Dickens, for example, could sum it all up without either sighing or sobbing. 'Wen you're a married man, Samivel, you'll understand a good many things as you don't understand now; but vether it's worth while goin' through so much to learn so little, as the charity boy said ven he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter o' taste.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Prejudices*, Ser. ii, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> *Pickwick Papers*, Ch. XXVII.



What are the facts of the problem?

Of the six appetites, that of sex is the latest to reach maturity; and when it does manifest itself, it is the most critically regulated and restricted of them all. However perverse the social treatment of the sex instinct may be, we are saved from the worst excesses by these very social sanctions. Happy is the man who can accommodate his sexual needs within the approved arrangements.

The relaxed standards of war-time released any number of surreptitious sex satisfactions, which, always with us, have been more brazenly pursued. With the return of peace, these are being rounded up again by public pressure no longer occupied with more urgent issues. With the problem at least driven off the streets, the community will be able to relax with the warm and comfortable feeling of having solved it. Actually, all that will have been achieved is the removal of the more obvious and impertinent affronts to respectability.

There is in the individual a somewhat analogous process. In early manhood, the physical aspects of sex are paramount. Throughout this disturbed period, standards are likely to be relaxed. By a natural evolution, a man comes to what is called the 'marriage period' when desire for change and adventure gives way to a taste for a fixed union and emotional repose. Marriage may or may not achieve for him these desiderata. The divorce facts and figures do not justify any placidity about either the social or the individual results.

For both the individual and the community, any considerable deviation from the conventional standards is costly. To protest that sex-morality is out of step with economic determinants does not save illicit indulgence from the most inveterate public displeasure. For society must look to her moat—the family unit.

The women who weep copiously at such films as *Blossoms in the Dust* do not appear to have registered any significant change in their attitude to unmarried mothers and illegitimate children. Authentic dramas which spurned the saccharine sentimentalism of such films, have been hissed off the stage. Society has an instinctive fear, carefully cultivated by the moralists, that any relaxation of sex conventions must destroy it. There is sufficient truth in this to make it ineradicable in collective thinking.

How then is the emotional life to be directed?

If the many promising schemes for post-war economic adjustment do in fact eventuate, we may see some diminution in the time-lag between the emergence of the sex-urge and its normal satisfactions in marriage. If our politicians and economists can really make the proper more generally the practicable, so that men can marry in the early instead of the late twenties, emotional stresses will be considerably reduced.

If this major change is not effected, then the strictest surveillance will be just another Dame Partington, and we shall be unable to make 'I will' wait upon 'I may'. Madariaga's stricture will still hold: 'Pretence and unreality hover about English love from its early days . . . England is thus the ideal field for the psycho-analyst. Driven under, lacking air, the passions develop more strongly if more morbidly.'<sup>1</sup>

Those who look for some other escape from the personality disturbances of sex may note thoughtfully the sorry experience of the 'emancipated' who flout the rules in a noble disdain for convention. Acknowledging no moral restraints, such people cannot, unless they are wealthy, ignore social disapproval. So the personality is poisoned by stealth, which always

<sup>1</sup> *Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards.*

provokes more emotional tension than it can release. The voices of the past and the prying eye of the present intrude upon unsanctioned pleasures and quite apart from moral considerations—the psychological consequences are devastating. Furtiveness can infect the whole personality, destroying its spontaneity and shadowing its most innocent hours. For such disorganized personalities it is cold comfort to be told that they create their own conflicts.

Those who advance the superior happiness of continence must reflect that this admirable counsel cannot touch the root of the matter—the upsurge of an instinctive appetite. ‘Those who belittle the difficulties of abstinence,’ writes Havelock Ellis, ‘may do well to consider the experience of the early Christian ascetics in the desert . . . These men were wholeheartedly devoted to the ideals of asceticism; they were living under the best possible conditions for cultivating such ideals. . . . Yet there was nothing that troubled them so much as sexual temptation.’ It is freely agreed that promiscuity is as unhealthy as Victorian prudery. But a spartan continence substitutes for true happiness a piteous half-dream.

At this point it is customary to speak of sublimation as a cure-all. It is, as has been said, a useful expedient—for some personalities. But it is conditioned by Nature and not by the society which so warmly commends it. That a few choice spirits contrive so to rationalize their emotional conflicts does not legitimize our befuddled sex-morality. It cannot be regarded as a universal corrective to emotional complexes. Nevertheless it can be conceded that sex can be creative apart from procreation. Where sublimation is possible to an individual, his sex-urges can indeed be creative without physical consummation. But it must never

be forgotten that this is a denial of Nature, to be tolerated psychologically at least, only as an interim expedient which for the good of man and his society must be speedily replaced by the normal outlets.

Nor can sex be sublimated on a basis of taboo, or fear. That may lessen vice, but it cannot create virtue, which is presumably what the restrictionists want. It must be said without equivocation that sublimation is for the comparatively few. To be successful it requires a peculiar temperament which Nature does not vouchsafe to many. It is pointless to quote military service as an example of some consequence. Were it not that Nature herself abates her forces under the artificial conditions of compulsory abstinence such as operate in some theatres of war, sublimation would be a melancholy failure.

Furthermore, psycho-somatic medicine has shown that many of the nervous disorders currently prevalent are the result of sexual suppression unsupported by the moral convictions upon which conscious sublimation rests. The Chinese have a proverb: 'It is better to satisfy the body than to befoul the mind.' That there is no relief in dalliance, no solution in pornography, and only torment in imaginative satisfactions makes the problem of those who cannot sublimate their emotional demands the more clamant and complicated. There may be no better alternative in adolescence than cold dormitories, hard beds and harder games. But there must be something more intelligent than our continued asquiescence in an economic system which makes marriage progressively more remote for each succeeding generation.

- (b) *The Emotional Problem of Anxiety and Nervousness*  
 'Worry is interest paid by those who borrow trouble.'

DEAN W. R. INGE

'The gloomy dean' may presumably be quoted with some relevance. By the emotional upsets associated with worry we certainly pay much interest before it falls due.

The situations most prolific of anxiety-states seem to be those of fear connected with authorities, apprehension as to economic security, worries contingent upon health and employment, and strange to say, the imagined judgements of other people upon our personality. The symptoms of such emotional discord are strain, irritability, querulousness, jealousy, and erratic behaviour.

It is fruitless to exhort such unhappy people. They themselves believe in the power and importance of self-control, which they exercise as best they can. It is the things which they cannot control which precipitate breakdown.

The personality in equilibrium with his environment finds his work interesting and profitable; enjoys change and relaxation in sports and hobby-interests; adapts himself to people; respects authority without being overwhelmed by it; holds his own among his fellows; and is neither unduly elated nor unduly downcast by his limitations. If in authority, he is neither afraid nor regardless of his subordinates.

But the anxiety-type achieves something less than these adjustments. The sum-total of his personality is 'nervousness'. He is never content or relaxed; is a constitutional 'worrier'; imagines himself depreciated by others; and has periods of causeless but very real apprehension. He quails before authority, and tries unconsciously to over-compensate his deficiencies, real or imagined, by false emphasis.

V. V. Anderson says that of 1,200 employees in a large sales organization, investigation showed that no

are not available save to the few, such unhappy personalities must do what they can toward self-understanding. There in brief is the justification for such a book as this. Some nervous people, with a little help and guidance, do contrive to reach a satisfactory adjustment. Others need and must have experienced psychiatric treatment. Psychological research, the results of which are becoming more widely known, is teaching us to appreciate how the instinctive forces in the mind, functioning through emotional feelings, can be controlled by the man himself. Only psychiatric medicine can tap the problems of the unconscious; but for the more common conflicts of man and his environment, introspective analysis is not barren of resource. The emotional problems of worry do not all lie below the threshold of consciousness.

Individual psychology is not a theoretical science, and has never belonged to the class-room. It is the tool whereby people may attain self-knowledge, and with it, the answer to many puzzling everyday problems. As a study it concerns real people, not shadowy abstractions; it deals with ordinary people as they think and act in the home, on the street and at work; it is a helpful science dealing with a man and his friends and the business of living. I have tried to apply it to the progressive problems of personality in the making. And nowhere is individual psychology more sensibly applicable than to these issues of anxiety and nervousness, insubstantial as they so often prove to be.

(c) *The Emotional Problems of Fear and Anger*

‘The one permanent emotion of the inferior mind is fear—fear of the unknown, the complex, the inexplicable. What he wants beyond everything else is safety.’

H. L. MENCKEN

'Every normal man must be tempted, at times, to spit on his hands, hoist the black flag, and begin slitting throats.'

IBID

The instinct of escape and the emotion of fear which goes with it have certain survival values. But to-day, the emotion is squandered upon any number of pointless alarms. There was a time when primitive man needed a large element of fear in his make-up. Animism peopled every dark corner, every whispering stream, every unknown shape with a malignant deity demanding sacrifice. The whole world was a hazard, and only he lived who walked softly. But nowadays superstition is seen for the boggy it is. The need for fear has diminished enormously, so much so that in times of peace, many find life so monotonous that they must invent risky pastimes and even riskier business projects to import into life a little exhilaration.

One of the emotional disbalances of modern life rises from this fact, that the instinct and emotion of fear have not diminished with the need for them. Consequently there is too much irrational and needless fear poisoning the personality. Deprived of sufficient reasonable things of which to be afraid, we invest with sinister import obstacles which are merely bothersome. These gremlins bore holes in our fabric for the sheer delight of watching our faces.

Admittedly it is not always easy to make a competent living. It never has been for everybody. But it is probably a good deal easier to-day than ever before, periodic depressions excepted. 'There are times when we cannot see one step ahead of us,' says Chrysis, 'but five years later we are eating and sleeping somewhere.' That was written about 300 B.C., but it could have been said at any time during the succeeding two and a quarter millennia. Since the idle rich seem also to

collect their peculiar anxieties, it would appear that even the resolution of our economic problem would not bring such delirious happiness as we sometimes, in our anxieties, imagine. It has yet to be shown that fear makes a man better equipped to earn a living.

Every serviceman knows that courage in war is not the prerogative of the mighty, nor is cowardice confined to the neurotic. Because a man daren't run away into something he fears even more—disgrace—he stands steadfast and defeats his fears by facing them squarely. This honourable process underlies most of the immediate heroism of every war. There are men who are utter strangers to the twitching nerve and the numbing fear, but they are few. I found that out in preparing the citation for one of the coolest pieces of daring recorded in the R.N.Z.A.F. in the Pacific, an act which won the decoration which stands next in precedence to the Victoria Cross. As this sergeant-armourer later said, he was 'too damned busy' to entertain his crowding fears in a burning, bombed-up aircraft.

There are few situations in normal life which merit our fearfulness, yet there are incurable glooms who say with Arthur Symons that:

'Life is a dream in the night, a fear among fears,  
A naked runner lost in a storm of spears.'

For such an attitude there are not sufficient reserves; life is an unequal contest lost before it is joined.

As for anger, it wouldn't be of such consequence if it weren't so wearing. Christopher Morley says that poetry comes with anger, hunger and dismay, and we can, without conceding too much, admit that the man who has lost all capacity for anger has little capacity for anything else. Anger is one of the sinews of the soul,



and he that wants it has a maimed mind, said Thomas Fuller. There are still too many injustices among men for a supine acceptance of their despoliation of human personality. Most of the literature of protest fulminates against these things which should arouse the anger of all good men. It is against such cruelties that we have been at war, which itself is tolerable only as a lesser evil. Cecil Day Lewis summons the world's honest anger when he writes:

'Make us a wind  
To shake the world out of this sleepy sickness  
Where flesh has dwindled and brightness waned!  
New life multiple in seed and cell  
Mounts up to brace our slackness.  
Oppression's passion, a full organ swell  
Through our throats welling wild  
Of angers in unison arise  
And hunger haunted with a million sighs,  
Make us a wind to shake the world!'<sup>1</sup>

These furies dignify mankind. One decries only the pointless angers provoked by selfish personal denials and acquisitive aims. These wear a man down by sheer emotional attrition.

There is a sure guide in experience as to the proper and useful and creditable angers. If one leaves us with an after-regret, it should be dropped from the repertoire. This is quite apart from ethics, for mere prudence bids us be sparing of so dangerous a drug as wrath. Like the final V-weapons of the enemy, it is as damaging to the man behind it as to those before it. Such emotional disturbances affect the health of mind and body. Honest anger can have a tonic effect upon the personality, but these personal petulances are the endemic fevers of selfishness.

<sup>1</sup> *The Magic Mountain*, 31.

## SUMMARY

The personality is motivated, actuated and complicated by its emotions. Instincts may determine our basic needs, but the emotions devise our multiple wants. Because our needs are few but our wants many, the emotions are restless, imperious, and a source of disbalance.

When there is adequate emotional outlet, morale within the Self is high. Frustrated, our emotions destroy morale. The resolution of these conflicts between individual wants and the restrictive prohibitions of society is the main business of the personality which is emotionally surcharged.

Normally, our emotions are 'vetted' by the mind, the cortex exercising a watching brief on the thalamus. But emergency finds the emotions in the ascendant, which may be good or bad according to the circumstances. It is, however, usually costly to indulge the emotions without restraint.

We cannot ignore the emotions. They must be either (*a*) expressed; (*b*) disciplined; (*c*) repressed; (*d*) sublimated; or (*e*) inhibited. Our choice in any given situation depends upon our understanding of the emotions themselves, and how they function within the personality as a whole. Their direction involves an appreciation of the three main spheres in which tension tends to recur.

These have been defined as (*a*) sex; (*b*) anxiety and nervousness; and (*c*) fear and anger. Repression in these spheres is always harmful, unsatisfactory and productive of neuroses. Inhibition is the negation of personality. Sublimation is a difficult recourse, discipline only less so, but is the only sensible solution.

In the emotions we find the sweet mystery of life,

its colour and warmth and attractiveness. Self-knowledge here illumines the whole of life.

The balanced personality depends upon the whole mental and emotional development for its poise and power. The harmony of the sentiments, dispositions and emotions affords that equilibrium of the whole man with his environment which is the meaning and purpose of mature personality.

#### THE RATING-KEY TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The thirty questions posed for this chapter have been framed to indicate a positive emotional reaction. That is to say, a high proportion of affirmative answers would suggest a rich and full emotional life. Not all of these reactions will be beneficial, or desirable, as the text of the chapter indicates. But the Questionnaire is designed merely to establish the emotional as against the unemotional type of personality. A large proportion of negative answers would suggest a colourless and unemotional character.

It is suggested that the reader should now scan his answers, noting the affirmatives and giving particular thought and attention to any indication of emotional dis-balance requiring a new approach in the light of the comments of the chapter.

Perhaps a visit to your family physician or a neural specialist may be indicated, should your case be revealed as one of psychic complexity, threatened by nervous breakdown. There is neither health nor heroism in bearing these things unaided. For the average reader, however, present purposes will be served if the self-knowledge here gained leads to further reflection and introspective experiment. Adjustment now lies in the reader's hands. It can rest nowhere else.

# THE QUESTIONNAIRE

## TO CHAPTER IX

### PART I

1. *Are you inclined to procrastinate?* .....
2. *Are you easily discouraged?* .....
3. *Are you prone to emotional and impulsive acts?* .....
4. *Do you tend to choose short-range interests?* .....
5. *Do you become 'flustered' in an emergency?* .....
6. *Is it difficult for you to sit down and quietly, single-mindedly, 'think things out'?* .....
7. *Do you talk a great deal?* .....
8. *Do you find it difficult to put your thoughts into words?* .....
9. *Are your failures due to lack of application?* .....
10. *Do you find it necessary to adopt a pose of knowledge, and assurance and ability?* .....

### PART II

1. *Have you demonstrated habits of industry by qualifying for your career technically, professionally or academically?* .....
2. *Do you place any great importance on punctuality?* .....
3. *As a child, did you have any systematic hobbies, like stamp-collecting, pet-keeping and so on?* .....

4. *Have you in maturity had to practise a firm self-discipline in some specific way and over a long period?* .....
5. *Are you easily able to find your things when you want them?* .....
6. *Since you were twenty, have you pursued any course of study, mastered any craft, or made good in any new employment?* .....
7. *Do you honestly consider that you have a firm, strong will?* .....
8. *Have you reached competence in any musical instrument, or in any competitive sport like tennis, golf, etc.?* .....
9. *Since reaching middle life, have you set out to master any new subject or branch of knowledge?* .....
10. *Did you, as a child, have any special handicaps, which you have since overcome by diligent application?* .....

## PART III

1. *Are you easily persuaded for or against anything?* .....
2. *Do you seek constant change and variety?* .....
3. *Are you interested only in casual, unplanned reading?* .....
4. *Do you suffer from a lack of independent judgement in practical affairs?* .....
5. *Would your associates regard you as 'weak' and 'undetermined'?* .....
6. *Do those who tend it regard your bedroom as 'untidy' and 'disorderly'?* .....

7. *Are you able to settle down to routine and uninteresting tasks without bothering about planning or rearranging them?* .....
8. *Are you a poor correspondent?* .....
9. *Are you addicted to the 'sour grapes' attitude toward objects you fail to achieve?* .....
10. *Have you a poor memory?* .....

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PROBLEM OF WILL-POWER

‘Thoughts become words; words become acts; acts become habits; habits become will; will becomes destiny.’

IF one were to believe the many systems which undertake to provide men with a ‘dynamic will-power’, the human Will is a sublime Faculty by which we can, when necessary, summon supreme effort. It is, they say, a sort of mental and moral ‘muscle’ which can be developed by a species of Sandowism. But despite the considerable rewards mankind has been happy to pay such purveyors of will-power, no one has ever been able to validate the claim that there is in the personality any such ‘faculty of Will’.

It is not that we do not possess any such unifying and co-ordinating factor as will-power. We most assuredly do. But it is not the robustious periwig imagined by the mind-training men. These master-cults, based upon the Faculty-phantasy, are illusory and disappointing, because they proceed from unsound psychological premises. Where they do succeed in aiding a man to firmer purpose, it is despite themselves, for there is no such single unit of character upon which developmental culture may be lavished. Such systems are like the apparatus which the impatient young Schumann invented to strengthen his fingers for a virtuoso career—ergo, a hand lamed for life. The Will is not one, but all the elements of character, and its strength cannot be won save through the balanced development of the whole personality.

The theory of volition here adopted is, I believe, the most satisfactory so far formulated to explain the nature and function of this mysterious entity called the Will. It has been evolved not in abstractions but in the practice of living. It offers a thoroughly practical method of fortifying the mind and character against weakness and irresolution. It takes account of those elements usually overlooked by the older 'mind-training' systems. In summary it may be stated thus.

By *character* is meant the sum-total of a man's make-up; his sentiments, dispositions, temperament, instincts, emotions and moods. *Personality* is taken to be the combination of these elements of difference and diversity into a coherent whole which is the man's expression of his character. *Will* is understood as those habit-systems through which character is formed and personality expressed. By the term *free will* it is suggested that every man determines his own character and personality through the habit-system he builds from the pastiche of inherited and acquired elements.

For 'Will' understand 'systems of habit' and the treatment in the following pages will be clear. It is held that a man strengthens his self-control, his mastery of his powers, not by the 'supreme concentration' of a 'faculty' or by some flexion of a 'mental muscle' as the psycho-careerists suggest, but by an organized system of habits. The position taken is that all we know of the Will is contained in a man's habits. By a 'strong' character we mean one who having made up his mind, adheres to a course of action. Weak character we ascribe to him who is easily diverted by difficulties or persuasion. Character *per se* we cannot observe. All that we know of a man we learn from his habitual way of life. Whether his Will be strong or weak, he makes it so by deliberately exercising a long



series of choices. That is why no consideration of volition apart from habit can be significant.

#### THE WILL AS HABIT

A man builds up his style of life by habitually choosing the direction in which he wishes to grow. His habit-systems are essentially himself. This is the meaning of personality as *self-determined*. By acting in the right way for his desired ends, a man develops habits that grow so strongly characteristic of himself that by observing *them* we can know *him*. A man may assume a particular persona on occasion, but his habitual self is his real self. When such habits have become inherent in the personality, they are so strong that deviation therefrom is difficult. Irrespective of his character, good or bad, such a man has a strong Will. The Will itself is merely the means, and may be good or bad, admirable or execrable only in the light of the ends to which it is applied. The present point is merely that will-power is regarded as habit, whether it be good, bad or indifferent.

That is why we cannot suddenly 'firm-up' our Will by any strenuous last-minute summons. Will-power can emerge only from long cultivation in the desired direction. Because our character has been consistently 'set' in a certain direction, sudden emergency can be met adequately and without any frantic recourse to some hypothetical 'faculty' of determination.

From these premisses, education and nurture consist in building up useful, constructive habit-responses. 'Education lies in developing those habits that enable a man to meet adequately, concrete and emergent situations.' In extremity, we cannot call in some mysterious führer-prinzip—an emergency leader—something other than our intrinsic self. At any given

moment we are what our habits have made us, and it is as such that we customarily act.

But, of course, men do not always act consistently with themselves. We are prone to foolish acts contrary to our habitual way of life. We jump the rails of our own established practice. For the nonce we are creatures not of habit but of impulse. Our past experience is not equal to this occasion. If this is only an exception to a well-established rule, we may rejoice in a strongly-developed Will. If it is a frequent occurrence, the Will is defective. The best-organized habit-systems are not infallible, but they are the only reliability known in human personality.

In his famous chapter on 'Habit', William James bids us guard against the habit of failure and cultivate the habit of success. Habit is held to be the basis of an achievement. That is why demanding poised and balanced judgement of an adolescent personality is like forcing an owl upon day. He is not yet conditioned to it; his habit-systems are not yet versatile and adequate; his 'Will' is not yet developed.

The making of personality may be traced along the steps by which habits are built.

#### THOUGHTS

'Really now you ask me,' said Alice, very much confused, 'I don't think——'

'Then you shouldn't talk,' said the Hatter.

The beginnings of habit stem from our thinking. This then is the gambit—from mental preoccupation with a concept, through developing purpose, to final accomplishment. What begins as intention, crystallizes into conduct and issues in achievement. In the process, a habit-system creates a permanent and enduring element in the character and personality. Will is the residuum.

The forty-ninth proposition of Spinoza's *Ethics* argues that Will and Intellect are one and the same thing. This is only to say that the beginning is thought, and the end is Will. In between lie the successive stages of habit-formation by which intellect at last expresses itself in conduct and character.

The process may be traced in every celebrated personality.

(a) *Bonaparte*

Regarded with justification as a man of strong will, Napoleon Bonaparte was dominated by one sentiment—love of power, to which, throughout his life, all other sentiments were subordinated. His every thought was conditioned by this overwhelming consideration. His earliest thought bent the twig as it later grew.

As a Corsican schoolboy he thought only of military authority. His playroom walls bore witness to his precocious love of sums and soldiers, for figures and outlines of battles were scribbled everywhere.

At the military school of Brienne, the nine-year-old lad concentrated all his attention upon the history of the military conquest of his native land. Shunning his schoolfellows and their play, he read incessantly from Plutarch's *Lives* and Caesar's *Gallic War*. He wrote to his mother: 'With my sword at my side, and Homer in my pocket, I hope to carve my way through the world.' He had already chosen even the methods by which he would achieve.

When he left for the Paris Military School his character was already described as 'masterful, impetuous and head-strong'. The note-books he filled with his fiery thought are now in the Lorenzo Medici Library at Florence, and from them it is evident that his ultimate rigidity of habit was founded in this paramount thinking of boyhood.

*(b) Frederick the Great*

The founder of the German General Staff was similarly conditioned in youth by his ill-favoured father, King Frederick William. The boy was delicate, scholarly, and by nature unsuited to the career for which his father demanded that he be trained. Since there was for the king only one virtue—military prowess—he interpreted this weakness as being ‘desperately evil’. He drew up a system of training implemented by brutal thrashings, stinging taunts and physical deprivations by which he was determined to make his son a replica of himself.

The youth ran away at eighteen, with his intimate companion, Lieutenant von Katte. Apprehended before they reached the border, their punishment was ferocious. The young prince was compelled to witness his companion’s execution by beheading. Then followed six months of imprisonment more rigorous than any convict is now compelled to undergo. Young Frederick saw the folly of further opposition, exhausted the vocabulary of contrition and promised amendment.

Note now the power upon the personality of mental preoccupation.

His thoughts were henceforth given entirely to military science. To his sister he wrote in his nineteenth year: ‘I have drilled, I drill, I shall drill. That is all the news.’ He had bought his physical liberty at the expense of his mind, which was to be in chains to militarism to the end of his days. His personality underwent a complete transformation. He came to despise all men as cannon-fodder. On becoming king, he launched his country upon thirty years of war. His early interest in literature and art had been so completely extinguished, his habits so oriented about

war, that seeing some of his men waver on the field he expressed his whole life philosophy in the celebrated utterance: 'Carrion! do you want to live forever?'

Frederick's educators knew how and where to begin their fell work of corrupting a character. By completely dominating a man's thinking, his whole Will may ultimately be conditioned. A delicate, thoughtful boy can be made into an arrant bully and brutal disciplinarian. Compel the sentiments, stamp out conflicting thoughts, stamp in the desired habit-patterns, coerce the emotions, bend the disposition, fashion the temperament—and you create the Will.

(c) *King Henry the Saint*

The consequences of breaking a boy's spirit were never more dramatically demonstrated than in the tragic case of Henry VI. The strong soul of the Plantaganets was virtually extinguished by stamping upon the flame of his independent thought.

His father—Henry V, the 'strong man of Agincourt'—was determined to bend his son after the kingly pattern of the time. Throughout his life, the young Henry was the recipient of thrashings that have become proverbial. His boyhood was one long corporal punishment. When he was three years old he was given a new nurse, and so conditioned was his mind already, that he issued a lisping edict that she was to use 'every effort to reasonably chastise Us on meet occasion'.

Severe corporal punishment was the accustomed instrument of education in the fifteenth century, and the scourge was recommended even by gentle mothers. One wrote to beg that her son's tutor 'will truly belash him till he will amend', adding: 'I had rather he were fairly buried than lost for default.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Historian's History of the World*, Plantaganet Period.

This brutal business of a brutal age might be expected to pass with the period it disgraced, but there are still too many parents who regard independent thought in their children with unease, and proceed to proscribe the budding personality into conventional nonentity. For the beating of the body, the modern parent may substitute the chilling of the spirit, the discouragement of original thinking, the strait-jacket of formalism and the rubric of things effete.

‘Evil is wrought by want of thought  
As well as want of heart.’

The classic principle of Schopenhauer applies to-day with equal force: ‘There is no absurdity so palpable but that it may be firmly planted in the human mind if you only begin to inculcate it before the age of five, by constantly repeating it with an air of great solemnity.’<sup>1</sup>

#### (d) *Native Inheritance*

What are we to make of the fact that in any one family, infants vary greatly in their will-power? One seems from earliest days to be strong-willed and ‘difficult’ to manage, where another appears malleable and docile. Intelligent parents, conducting their family life on a high plane of freedom and individuality, often find that one child is obedient and ‘good’ while his brother has a rebellious Will. Since these characteristics emerge before any firm habit-systems, how can we explain what appears to be inherited will-power?

Our theory of volition holds good when it is remembered that there is no faculty of the Will either by inheritance or acquisition. We inherit an emotional disposition, and what is loosely called ‘Will’ in the infant is merely a display of emotion. One child is

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Pessimism*, Psychological observations.

born with a stronger emotional tendency which registers in 'wilfulness', by which we really mean contrariety. This child has a stronger and more decided temperament from the outset, but he does not thereby demonstrate will-power as rational purpose. The primary instincts must be patterned into approved habit-systems before a child can be said to possess Will in the sense of consciously reasoned choice.

The infant does not possess such a Will, however vehement his wishes may be. He has vigorous instinct-patterns not yet organized into habits. He drinks, cries, defecates and sleeps indiscriminately. But presently he will eat and drink only at the family meal-times; will learn to control his emotional reactions by taking thought; will go to stool as convenient; will sleep only at night. Habit begins to supplant instinctive behaviour. Not till then does the child possess individual character and Will at all. Human Will presupposes a rational life, and free choice. And it is in the thought processes that the whole chain of events begins. Control the thought and you can control the will.

(2) *Thoughts become Words*

'Be not careless in deeds, nor confused in words,  
nor rambling in thought.'

MARCUS AURELIUS

Nowhere does the personality reveal itself more than in its speech. Here, too, habit becomes our master or our servant. Words are our thoughts one stage further into fixity of character.

In the home, children learn first by example; but as soon as speech appears, the child's mind is open to wider monitions. From now on he will scarcely ever learn anything without speech playing its part, just as he will rely thereupon for the communication of his own thoughts.

‘I think and know, therefore I am an intelligent being. I speak, therefore I become an intelligible being.’

Looseness of thought will inevitably reflect itself in kindred forms of speech. Thus understood, language is a medium of expression for the whole personality, not merely an instrument for persuasion or an artifice for making money.

To render language a more precise vehicle of thought, the new science of semantics has been engrossed with word-meanings. Our world of words is vast, and since the completion of the Oxford Dictionary no part of knowledge is better mapped. The person who wishes to become a connoisseur of language will find unending delight in the process, for the human mind exults in precision, whether it be the spinning perfection of a dynamo, a symphony in sound or steel or colour, or the witchery of words in a polished oration. It is here that the cultivated personality is immediately discerned.

But a man reveals himself no less in his silences and speech suppressions. The personality acts as an editor, carefully choosing those expressions deemed appropriate to the occasion. The immature personality exercises no such check upon language and is thereby revealed as such to the attentive observer. Freud postulates in everybody a psychic force which represses into the less conscious parts of the mind those thoughts which are incompatible with the more conscious ideals. Thus there grows up the traditional cleavage between the man's inner character and his outward personality.

It has been noted how this disparity may become so great as to break down the nervous system by the strain of maintaining a false front. But on the other hand these disguises of the personality may be those harmless and necessary restraints which all men must exercise in society. It is all a matter of degree and integration.



According to Freud we are therefore whited sepulchres, decent and civilized only in outward seeming, but inwardly full of corruption. As Dr. Kenneth Walker writes of the Freudian view: 'We all carry within us, locked in some dark cellar of the mind, not a comparatively respectable skeleton, but a full-bodied and lascivious savage. In spite of our efforts to isolate this unwelcome guest in his cellar, he rules our thoughts and actions, and at night when we are asleep he actually ascends the stairs and appears in our dreams. Unfortunately for us, the character of this occupant of the cellar is so utterly disreputable . . . that he is inevitably at loggerheads with that respectable figure which we present to the world. Hence the eternal conflict waged in the depths of our being, the unending tussle on the cellar stairs. Our lot is indeed a hard one, and it is not surprising that we occasionally break down under the strain.'<sup>1</sup>

This is surely too much of a bad thing. Freud's work, as has so often been pointed out, was the product of the clinic and the hospital ward. His view is that of psychopathology—the treatment of the mentally diseased and disordered. What he says may be true of the sick mind. In such unhappy persons, their social disguises must be an entirely artificial creation quite out of keeping with their twisted thinking. But the persona of the normal individual is explicable on quite creditable grounds as a disciplined edition of the inner self. In chapter five has been drawn the difference between the necessary persona of normal people and the false mask of the hypocrite. Freud deals only with the latter, as the deceit of the diseased mind.

The Viennese clinics indulged every wayward manifestation of the unhealthy mind in a desire to chart its

<sup>1</sup> *Meaning and Purpose*, p. 71.

vagaries. The wealthy women who professed themselves 'cured' in these intimate verbal probings presumably got their money's worth by the new and expensive form of concupiscence, through which for a large fee they were accorded the privilege of unloading all the bawdiest contents of the mind on to a male confidant. This process of 'transfer' was not infrequently accompanied by the patient's open desire for sexual indulgences. Indulging illicit thought and irregular utterance was a natural step toward indulging illicit acts. The nerve specialist is on ground as tenebrous as that of the voodoo cults. It is a typical Freudian conceit to assume 'cures' with the same optimism as the revivalist counting his conversions. Both are dealing with unmanageable mental and psychic processes.

The average individual will prefer to regard the more theatrical psychiatric conclusions as a chamber of horrors—the psychological equivalent of Madame Tussaud's collection. They are different from normal mental processes both in degree and in kind. They do, however, serve to show how thoughts become words; how unhealthy thoughts pass into unhealthy speech and unhealthy action.

The reader need distrust his thoughts for no worse reason than that they are often unorganized, inconclusive and lead to foolish, pointless speech, whose echoes travel far. Freud would have us believe that the reason and the will are the slaves of the darkest instincts. Admittedly, much of our 'moral' thinking merely puts an acceptable complexion upon our instinctive choices and preferences. But to assert that all our thoughts are of this impoverished character is to magnify a small truth into a falsehood.

We need not distrust our secret thoughts so much as disentangle them. To accept the notion of a lascivious

lodger on the third floor back is to poison the whole personality. This tortuous symbolism achieves its *reductio ad absurdum* in the Freudian surrealists, who, absorbed in the unconscious, have conceived such lunacies as Dali's 'Debris of an automobile giving birth to a blind horse biting a telephone'.

### (3) *Words become Deeds*

The evolution of the will becomes clearer now, as we discern language passing over into conduct. It is at this point that for so many the struggle becomes unequal. The deed and not the will confounds us. Instead of doing things, we dream them all day long.

Why are we infirm of purpose?

In her compendious investigation of early mental traits among famous and successful men, Dr. C. C. Cox has concluded that there are four factors which stand out clearly in their childhood.<sup>1</sup> (1) Obstacles brought out their powers. (2) They were indomitable in their undertakings. (3) They carried through important tasks on their own initiative. (4) Their wish to excel amounted almost to a passion. In conjunction with Professor Terman, Dr. Cox sought to decide (a) what are the childhood signs of a future strong personality? and (b) do such personality-traits in childhood prophesy future achievements of a high order? Or as we are expressing it, is there evidence of early habit-system as the basis of their later strength of will and character?

She took a list of sixty-seven mental, moral and volitional traits based upon Webb's analysis of personality, and rated all her study-cases according to the available information on each famous individual. She found that they were not always obedient children, nor

<sup>1</sup> *Early Mental Traits of Three Hundred Geniuses.*

were they easy to manage. But they all scored well above the average in positive moral and personality traits.

Even in childhood, the scientists stood out by their systematic behaviour, their balance, originality, tendency to be firm rather than changeable, their determination and persistence and their desire to excel. In early years, artists showed a high degree of æsthetic feeling and desire to create, but were less organized in the habit life. They were unorthodox in their ideas, but gave early evidence of their firm belief in their powers of expression. Novelists, poets and dramatists rated high during boyhood in qualities of leadership, originality of ideas, memory, and keenness of observation, but spent a great deal of time in organizing their pleasures. These types were not so notably attentive to fixed patterns of habit, for they rated lower in persistence, balance and common sense, and were sometimes weak in logical reasoning. Future essayists, historians, scholars and critics ranked high in memory, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, absence of conformity and profoundness of apprehension. Soldiers-to-be showed high ratings for physical energy, persistence in the face of obstacles, readiness of action, and formed habit.

There may be in the work of Dr. Cox a too-evident determination to find that which was sought, but it seems reasonable to conclude that success in life does demand the early establishment of these habits of action calculated to mature into the right kind of will for any given purpose. That the absence of favourable environment has denied fulfilment to many we all know. These die with all their music in them. But where so many do succeed in achieving their destiny, the credible conclusion is that we are what our habits make us. Habit may be defined quite simply as 'an acquired aptitude

for some particular mode of action'. Does this not suggest that success is a matter of right habit-patterns, deliberately directed to chosen ends? Surely this is the explanation of that triumph of mediocre brains over natural brilliance which is so common in our experience?

Habit is the ingrained method of doing what we have chosen to do. It is therefore freedom, but a freedom which is fixed by its own choices. When our thought processes are expressed in word and act which enable us to achieve our best, habit is a coadjutor. When they are unplanned and undirected, the very absence of firm and purposeful habit betrays us into weakness, vacillation and indecision. As Dr. Johnson has it, 'the chains of habit are generally too small to be felt till they are too strong to be broken'. It is patient habit, not sudden frantic resolve which makes for achievement.

By a not unnatural law, our calling reflects and is reflected by our speech. When the celebrated judge, Lord Tenterden expired, he said to his bedside companions: 'Gentlemen of the jury, you will now consider your verdict.' He may, of course, have been speaking to the Furies, or the Fates, or whoever it is that judges Judges in the next world. But whether he had in mind those present or those to come, he expressed himself in the language of his vocation. Years of study, apprenticeship and practice mould a man's speech characteristically, rendering any personality disguise of little avail before the discerning. The *nouveau riche* seldom do more than ape the gentleman, not merely because they try too hard, but because they simply cannot unravel the past and undo their betraying habits of thought and speech.

The fashion in which a man's speech both moulds and reflects character is evident in analysis of the personality of men of letters.

(a) *Alexander Pope*

‘A distorted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised by sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface; a feeble, sickly licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images . . .’—this is, of course, Macaulay on the character of Pope, and at his denigratory worst.

Under individual psychology, what factors are discernible in this son of a linen draper whose *‘Iliad’*, said Johnson, ‘tuned the English tongue’? Hazlitt saw him very differently from Macaulay: ‘Pope was a man of exquisite faculties and of the most refined taste: he was in poetry what the sceptic is in religion. If I had to choose, there are one or two persons—and but one or two—that I should like to have been better than Pope.’ Happy the man who can provoke a Macaulay and command a Hazlitt.

But how came this disunity in Pope’s character—this dual personality—the soaring mind and the grovelling character? It is a not uncommon spectacle, particularly in a personality so riven with psychological conflicts as was his.

First, the author of the *Dunciad* must be assessed as a product of his time. He decorated an age whose temper aptly matched his own mingled melancholy and violence of mind. The contemporary taste for personal abuse affected stronger minds than Pope’s, directing thought and speech and conduct inexorably into character and destiny. His mastery of language made him poetry’s most polished iconoclast, and as is not unknown in an age of detraction, his talent for invective paid a handsome dividend. His mind, hard

as a diamond, and as flashing, made him endless enemies. Grub Street authors, scholars, women of fashion, book-sellers—it is always Mr. Pope versus the world.

Was there some besetting feeling of inferiority to account for this violent over-compensation? We find it in his religion, and in his physical defects. As a Roman Catholic, Pope was a member of a minority and persecuted persuasion. This disqualified him from any public office and roused his own peculiar forms of Masculine Protest. Then too he was crippled by a tubercular infection which resulted in spinal curvature. Dr. Johnson says of him that in middle life he was 'so weak as to stand in perpetual need of female attendance; extremely sensible of cold so that he wore a kind of fur doublet under a shirt of a very coarse warm linen. When he rose he was invested in a bodice made of stiff canvas, being scarce able to hold himself erect till it was laced, and he could then put on a flannel waistcoat. His one side was contracted'. His Victorian biographers speak of a third handicap—want of a public-school education. Here are all the elements of a vivid sense of inferiority, over-compensated into vanity and vindictiveness. The contrast between this analysis and that of Lamb will hardly escape the reader.

Pope's bitter feud with Dennis did nothing to lessen the hostilities incipient in his twisted body and ill-matched mind. The latter's pamphlet on Pope had long passages of savage personal abuse about the poet's miserable crooked body, and Pope never forgot the pain and humiliation of this attack. Though he feigned an indifference to it, he lashed back at Dennis through Addison, avenged bitterly a snigger from Colley Cibber, and poured out his repressions in the *Satires* and the *Dunciad*. Life as he found it and made it; the torment of society and his own unhappy

temperament drove him into literary virulence unmatched in his time. Nothing escaped his vitriolic pen, certainly not his own nature and character, and as his fame advanced, so also progressed the degeneration of his personality. Cibber exulted in describing his rescue of the poet from 'a house of carnal recreation' where he was found in the arms 'of a diseased bawd'.

Not even Pope's few friendships could sweeten these waters of marah—not even his love for an adored mother. Part of him longed for peace and quiet: 'I did not care for living always in boiling water,' he wrote, but his own inner conflicts and mental tension were forever bursting out into antagonism against the society which calumniated him. The universe was a gigantic conspiracy against—Pope. Is this not the now-familiar symptom of the persecution complex?

The single mind and the double personality; high courage and endless hate; this dichotomy of character—a calculating, quivering sensibility coupled with ferocious abuse; in all these contradictions Pope was that blend of good and bad which is not equilibrated early enough. Words become deeds with a vengeance; attitudes harden into character; character determines a destiny.

The importance of habit-formation as the basis of character and will is apparent in the analysis of yet another celebrated personality:

(b) *Richard Brinsley Sheridan*

'If this were played upon a stage now I could condemn it as an improbable fiction.'

*Twelfth Night*, Act III Sc. 4.

If ever a screen scenario comes to be written round the life of this dramatist-orator-statesmen, it will be dismissed as unreal by even those whom Hollywood



has inured to the improbable. But it could be the basis of an illuminating psychological drama.

There were Sheridan's school days at Harrow; the friendless, low-spirited lad 'much given to crying alone' and so 'slighted by masters and tormented by the boys as a poor player's son' that he came to hate his origins and loathe the stigma of having a father upon the stage.

There would be resourceful glosses on the man who was unfaithful to his lovely and devoted wife, who diddled his creditors in a way new even to modern American ingenuity, who ratted on the money-lenders, betrayed his leader, Fox, and fawned on a daft king. Imagine what could be done with the final scene in the Abbey, with five peers and a bishop as pall-bearers, and two royal dukes and half the peerage jostling for place in the technicolour pageant.

What a personality is here, in the man who fought duels over the lovely Lady of Bath, then eloped with her to protect her fragile virtue. The wittiest man of his time, did he not write three plays, each the best of its kind in our language? And the niceties demanded by the film censors could be preserved with the *deus ex machina* conveniently provided by the actual incident of Pamela. Here vice was confounded—virtue vindicated—in real-life melodrama.

At forty-one, the dramatist fell madly in love with this alleged daughter of Mme. de Genlis, a tearing beauty of eighteen. Then Fate played Sheridan a trick which was so improbable that not even the studios would dare to use it were it not fact. When Sherry's wife had been most hurt and hopeless over his infidelities, she had consoled herself briefly with Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Now, with his wife just buried, Sherry becomes infatuated with Pamela, who goes to

Paris. Whom does she meet there—and marry—but Lord Edward Fitzgerald! Poetic justice such as this would require no manipulation by the screen's professional moralists.

The film would surely reach its apogee in portraying Sheridan's part in the impeachment of Warren Hastings in Westminster Hall. Against that glittering backdrop, and with the greatest array of orators ever assembled for a prosecution; with the Queen herself, the royal dukes, 170 peers, the whole Commons, and the rank and fashion of England packing the galleries and hanging on every word of Sheridan's four-day speech, what lighting and trucking and angling and smearing we should have! No scenarist need balk at creating a hero so extravagantly endowed. It was done by Nature, not the hand of man, needing only judicious tinkering to yield a fine blend of *Scarface*, *The Young Mr. Pitt* and *Gone With the Wind*.

What the elephant is to the dissector, is Sheridan's personality to the analyst. The clues to the complicated jig-saw of character will already have occurred to the reader. There was that unhappy experience at school, where, scorned as the son of a common stage-player, Sheridan's pride is so deeply wounded. His style of life was a constant striving to overcome the meanness of his origin and the origin of his means.

He is held in contempt because of his father's association with the stage. Hating the theatre in consequence, Sherry is determined to conquer it. He made it a rule never to see a play through, till necessity finally demanded that he supervise rehearsals of the *Duenna*. Yet he lived to become the acknowledged master of sentimental stage comedies.

His school companions laugh at his inability to spell correctly. When he is forty he does it little better

than he did at fourteen, but he has compensated for that by his literary brilliance.

Those he envies move in a world of romance. He will outdo them all. He roisters and fights and philanders with the worst of them, and steals the Maid of Bath from under their very noses.

They snigger that he married her for her money. He will refuse to permit her ever again to sing professionally, though she is the most famous singer in England, and is offered £3,000 for twenty concerts.

He must outface his detractors, so he buys Drury Lane Theatre. People have been wondering ever since where the money came from. An age rich in scandalous libels was not above suggesting that Sheridan forced his lovely wife to 'grant the last favour' to the Prince of Wales in return for £20,000.

In the Commons, still conscious of being the actor's son, he crosses swords with Pitt, who sneers openly that the writer should keep his jests and dramatic turns for the low theatres he owns. So Sheridan covers himself with glory by his Warren Hastings *tour de force*.

Sheridan was just another genius who never bothered to subject himself to disciplined habits. So the end came ingloriously. With King George now quite mad and unable further to protect him, Sheridan loses his seat in Parliament; and being no longer immune, is arrested for debt. It makes a sorry fade-out.

Both Pope and Sheridan have shown how words become deeds, and how thought controls character, through the will as habit.

(4) *Acts become Habits*

'First across the gulf we cast  
Kite-borne threads, till lines are passed,  
And habit builds the bridge at last.'

J. B. O'REILLY

The process proceeds inexorably—from thought, to speech, to action, and to habit. Finally, we can no longer shed our character as the tuatara lizard quits its worn-out skin. It is ours as we have built it, step by step.

This theory of volition is really an ancient one in modern habiliments. From Socrates onwards, educators have stressed the importance of forming good habits as an instrument of the will. It is generally held that the first twenty years constitute the formative period for personal habits such as diction, poise of body, social manners, taste in food and dress and leisure. It was formerly deemed unlikely that a man would learn a foreign language after twenty, but we now realize that by the very emergence of will as a system of habits, the mature mind can grapple with memory problems more readily than that of the youth.

The important years for the formation of vocational and professional habits are held to be those between twenty and thirty. It is during these years that most men acquire the mastery of their calling, and once again, this is accomplished by cementing methods into planned habits.

In the classic passages of William James's treatment of habit, there occur five axioms for the fixation of isolated acts into permanent patterns of behaviour.<sup>1</sup>

(1) *Begin with as vigorous and decided an initiative as possible.* Fortify yourself at the outset by the pressure of public opinion, letting it be known that you are cultivating this or that habit. Reinforce your resolution by open avowal, and once committed, allow nothing to blunt your initial ardour.

<sup>1</sup> *The Principles of Psychology* (dated but still a classic work for general reading).

(2) *Permit no exception until the new habit is established firmly.* With each allowed exception, we obliterate the neural pattern of physical habits, or the 'mental set' of moral purpose. We slip downhill each time, and it is well to remember that while we go downhill in the fullness of our vigour, we come back in the infirmity of our weakness. As James puts it: 'There is no more miserable human being than one in whom nothing is habitual but indecision.'

(3) *Make your nervous system your ally instead of your enemy.* Do not indulge cravings which conspire against your determination. Restraint, temperance, discipline in one's early years, result in a lessening of the strife of the members against the mind. 'The hell to be endured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters the wrong way.'

(4) *Seize the first opportunity to act on every resolution you make.* Acts become habits only by immediacy. To defer action is to turn aside into dreaming. To think that there will be a more convenient season is to err. Will-power is not something that can in crisis be reached for out of thin air. It must be taken in time and all of the time.

(5) *Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day.* The man likely to withstand a crisis is he who has fashioned daily a disciplined mind and temper. He does not need to rely upon emotional decisions, nor upon last-minute efforts at self-control. Constant application has made the faculty of habit firm and constant.

James asseverates that 'habit is thus the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent. It alone is what keeps us all within the bounds of

ordinance'. In writing for the individual, it must be shown that what is good for the hive is also good for the bee. The purpose of this chapter is to show that will-power as accruing from firm habit-systems is as valuable to the man himself as it is to his society. It is strictly true to say that it is habit alone which keeps the individual within his own ordinances.

Professor G. M. Whipple applied intelligence tests and character ratings to a large body of students who had failed in university work. His results showed that only six per cent of them could be adjudged too unintelligent to accomplish the studies they undertook. He concluded that lack of basic intelligence was rarely the cause of such failures. Extended diagnoses over a wide field of human endeavour would seem to support Whipple's findings. Why do people, in general, fail?

Twenty per cent of his test-group failed for good and sufficient reasons such as lack of money, worry about family affairs and so on—things which the student could scarcely control. But eighty per cent possessing sufficient intelligence, and immune from these distractions, failed from the following controllable causes: failure to apply themselves, the subordination of work to play, over-emphasis on dilettante interests, pre-occupation with extra-curricular activities, etc. etc.

In short, they lacked habits of industry, will-power, perseverance and self-discipline: not as inborn faculties but as acquired characteristics.

The significant study of Dunn and Bradstreet, analysed the causes of failure among manufacturers and business men over a period of forty years. They too concluded that twenty per cent of failures in business are due to elements beyond individual control, i.e. changes of style, financial depressions, changes of trade routes, acts of God and other imponderables. And

again, eighty per cent of all the failures they reviewed could be attributed to lack of perseverance, over-caution, indecision, incompatibility and sheer muddle-headedness. Lacking habits of disciplined method, these men failed in practical affairs.

We might well say with Demosthenes: 'I will not purchase regret at such a price.'

Someone will conclude that this is all very well for those with the right temperament, who can buckle down to routine and who are naturally amenable to discipline. What of those whose temperament is mercurial, artistic, emotional rather than rational? Mechanical exactitude comes to such persons with great difficulty, if at all. It is surely useless to commend copy-book maxims to such people.

But is this so certain? I have known at least one great artist who affords a striking example of what must be self-evident—that it is precisely the artistic and emotional character which most requires to be buttressed by disciplined habit if it is to avoid defeat at its own hands.

#### FEODOR CHALIAPIN

Here was a man of peasant birth, inadequate education, Bohemian manners and with an enormous zest for the pleasures of life, who nevertheless made himself a perfectly-tuned instrument of his art. It was only by the strictest regimen of habit that he mastered his prodigious natural powers to become a world celebrity.

An autographed set of his recordings reminds me of an interview with Chaliapin in 1926, when he gave three concerts in Auckland and Wellington. That hour stands out in memory as one recalls a barrage or a blitz. I was writing musical notes for a local journal, and went along to see the great basso forewarned by all the

stories of his gargantuan appetite, his over-characterizations, peasant rudeness and scorn for stage conventions. In the end I withdrew without a written note. He just overwhelmed one with his torrent of broken English, his masterful striding to and fro, his magnificent declamation about the most trivial matters, and his sudden piercing comment that came to the heart of a matter with a finality that cancelled further discussion. To this day I carry the shattering effect of that huge blockbuster of a fellow in his Astrakhan-collared overcoat.

What he said that day sent me to his autobiography for the clue to the man's personality and success. It is there, and it bears directly upon our present point. 'Following the best models,' he writes, 'I continued to take every opportunity to learn and work, even after successes which would have been enough to turn the head of the most well-balanced young man.' And again: 'No work can be fruitful if it has not as its basis some ideal principle. The basis of my work upon myself was the fight against the tinsel which darkens the inner light, against those wilful complications which destroy beautiful simplicity, against vulgar effects which disfigure grandeur.'

This confirmed what Chaliapin himself had said. When he first appeared at the New York Metropolitan in 1907, his performances were greeted with varied comment. The robustness of his impersonations was scarcely congenial to the current taste. His personality was too overpowering, even in the part of Mefistofele. But when he returned to America in 1921, he was universally acclaimed. The rough facets of his stage personality had been refined. There was studied restraint about the man who had spent the intervening years in the strictest discipline of his turbulent natural gifts. In the process he had lost nothing of his



extraordinary powers, but had gained what every great artist must possess—the conscious possession of power in reserve. This he won by the most deliberate application to habits of industry.

That he was temperamentally a lusty son of the soil made his artistic discipline the more phenomenal. It was, for example, his common practice to call for a crate of strawberries, empty the whole six chips into a large bowl, flood them with champagne, and having mashed them to a dreadful pulp—eat the lot. In appetite, he was a Philistine, but he could be undeviating in his artistic standards.

If Toscanini could refuse to present *Il Trovatore* because he did not consider the singers adequate to the opera, Chaliapin was a singer who refused a part until he knew himself to be its equal. He would concentrate furiously upon the characterization, foregoing every relaxation until he lived and was the part to be played. Where the great Italian conductor would have no fewer than fifty rehearsals for the revival of so familiar a work as *Aida*, the Russian singer would toil for months in his determination to *be*, rather than *play*, a character. That is why, with the music of both men, it has never before sounded quite so effective—quite so right—as it is when they perform it.

The emotional temperament must conform to some such strict pattern of organized habit if it wills to succeed. That these persons can accomplish such self-discipline was demonstrated when Conried brought Chaliapin back to the Metropolitan for the second time. The basso was thirty-four when he learned that his best was not good enough for the American public. He was forty-eight when he returned in triumph, master of himself and of his art.

(5) *Habits become destiny*

‘ Ah, nothing is too late  
 Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate.  
 Cato learned Greek at eighty; Sophocles  
 Wrote his grand Oedipus, and Simonides  
 Bore off the prize for verse from his compeers  
 When each had numbered more than four-score years.  
 ‘ Chaucer at Woodstock with the nightingales,  
 At sixty wrote the Canterbury Tales;  
 Goethe at Weimar toiling to the last  
 Completed Faust when eighty years were past.’  
*· Morituri Salutamus*, Stanza 22, LONGFELLOW

This is all very heartening, but such exploits are possible only to those who are conditioned to unswerving habits of industry. Destiny commonly has more resources than we claim, and the reason is that we give up trying. Most of us plan to work only as long as we must, and our industry is like a time-clock which runs down about retiring age.

Booth Tarkington describes this mental habit which conspires against great achievement. ‘ They were upon their favourite theme: “When I get to be a man!” Being human, though boys, they considered their present state too commonplace to be dwelt upon. So when the old men gather they say: “When I was a boy!” It really is the land of nowadays that we never discover.’<sup>1</sup>

Nor is our destiny fixed in youth, though it is by the time we gather in the chimney corner with rheumy eye and nostalgic regretfulness. The list of those who broke with unlikely beginnings is impressive. Hobbes, Keats, Newton, Locke and Sterne were weaklings prematurely born. Jeremy Bentham was an unhealthy child, yet he not only lived to be eighty-four, but by

<sup>1</sup> *Penrod*.

He assumed a variety of poses, for the actor in him made him an exhibitionist who put form and flourish into everything he did or uttered. His flattery of others and his conceit offended English good taste. His boundless egotism betrayed him into sometimes ridiculous assumptions of æsthetic authority, so that those who really did understand music and painting regarded him as a charlatan. Not until it was too late did he retrieve his reputation for shallowness and insincerity—the penalty of being witty among Anglo-Saxons.

The Barnum in him borrowed and plagiarized without acknowledgement, a habit which did little to commend him to his creditors in such matters. Whistler vented his annoyance by saying: ‘Except that he dines at our tables and picks from our platters the plums for the puddings he peddles in the provinces, what has Oscar in common with Art? Oscar the amiable, irresponsible, esurient Oscar; with no more sense of a picture than of the fit of a coat; Oscar has the courage of the opinions—of others.’

Yet for one of such prodigious self-esteem, Wilde was remarkably free from malice. Even his comment on an actress reputed to suffer from sex-propensities similar to his own, had in it an impish gentleness; ‘Dear ——, she is one of Nature’s gentlemen.’ Again, when Henley brutally reviewed *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* he was merely kicking a man who was down for bad. But the unfortunate Wilde seemed to have no resentment. He contented himself with a rejoinder which revealed to the world too late the serenity of temper so long concealed under his artificiality. ‘Henley,’ he said, ‘owes me seven-and-six. The other day I read a review of his, praising a novel by someone named Mary Cholmondeley. I bought the book and before I had read very far I came on this

sentence: "The birds were singing on every twig and on every little twiglet." Now you know, when an artist comes on a sentence like that in a book it is impossible for him to go on reading it. So I consider that Henley owes me seven-and-six.'

Of his own contradictory self he could say: 'I am the only person in the world I should like to know thoroughly, but I don't see any chance of it at present.' As though he had anticipated such analyses as ours, he wrote: 'Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a *mask* and he will tell the truth.' Was ever Jung's persona more consciously confessed? or Adler's analytical methods more competently self-administered?

Wilde's waywardness may be attributed in part to his childhood, for his parents were Bohemians and intellectuals who left the boy largely to his own devices. A period in Paris at thirty confirmed his casual approach to life, and his money-marriage made unnecessary any corrective responsibilities which might have made his character strong instead of extravagant.

Nevertheless, Wilde had himself to thank for his undisciplined end. His personality remains in his writing, but of his character nothing is left, and it is character, not personality, which makes immortality. There is peculiar mockery in the fact that his finest comedy for the stage is *The Importance of being Earnest*. That, its author never could be.

In one of his poems he has a highly artificial line which purports to confess: 'I have found the lover's crown of myrtle better than the poet's crown of bays.' It was his destiny when at last fell the final curtain, to have forfeited both.

Of himself Wilde wrote: 'I can resist everything except temptation.' It is such for whom the bell tolls.

## SUMMARY

The case for will-power has been presented through a man's habit-systems. By them alone may he achieve a unified command of the contending elements of character. With their staunch support a man contrives a reconciliation as between his character and his personality—between what he is and what he seems.

Repudiating the notion of will as a faculty upon which in emergency a man may rely, it has been argued that unless his way of life has been organized with deliberation, crisis is a man's undoing. There is for him no supreme authority in temporary confusions.

Out of his inheritance and his husbandry, a man grows his own character, which in turn becomes his destiny. Self-determined, he is free to make of himself what he will—and the way is by his habit-patterns.

The Self has been regarded as a democracy, and as Plato says in the *Republic*, 'a democracy is a charming form of government, full of variety and disorders, and dispensing a sort of equality to equals and unequals alike'. It is for a man to elect his own Cabinet from these noisy constituents. The fascist emotions, the Jacobite desires, and the anarchist moods are all unruly members—irascible opponents of constitutional government.

To surrender governance to any of these is to force the abdication of sovereign Reason. But let Reason form its ministry—each one a useful habit-system—and there is ordered rule and a healthy state.

In widening spheres of responsibility, thought passes into speech—into acts—into habits—into character—into a career. At no point in the long process is man a helpless creature of circumstance. Schemes and stratagems there will be; the man against himself, and

the Self against Society. By sound habits alone can he circumvent all such betrayals from within.

To be corrupt, insincere, irresolute in thought—is to be these things everywhere. To be indiscreet, irresponsible and undisciplined in word is to maim and hamper action. To be indolent, or violent, or cynical in conduct is the certain creation of ineffective character. To fail of character is to imperil all.

‘It may never be too late to amend, but

“Old houses mended

Cost little less than new before they’re ended.”’

Firm habits are a man’s preventive measures. A life without them yields a personality without a character, because habit is the only basis of will-power.

#### THE RATING-SCALE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Designed to reveal evidence of positive habits of industry and willed behaviour, the thirty questions fall into three sections.

*Part I* provides for degrees of disposition, and is to be answered accordingly, allowing 0 for ‘often’; 1 for ‘sometimes’ and 2 for ‘seldom’. The possible total for Part I is thus 20.

*Part II* covers the more personal habit-systems, and the questions are framed to show positive Will and self-discipline through affirmative answers. Thus the reader scores 0 for negative answers, and 1 for affirmative. The possible total for Part II is 10.

*Part III* embraces the more mental factors of habit, the questions calling for negative answers to indicate desirable habit-systems and control. Again, score 0 for affirmative answers and 1 for negative answers. The possible total for Part III is 10.

With a maximum possible score of 40 for this questionnaire, where a reader scores 30 or more, he may

congratulate himself as possessing well-defined habit-systems, with the suggestion of a firmly developed Will. Less than 20 would indicate marked undiscipline of mind and character.

It can only be repeated that defects of will-power are seldom if ever admitted. We feel a particular mortification in being thought 'weak-willed', preferring to ascribe our failings to anything rather than this.

If by some means you have scored poorly in this test, you rate correspondingly high in honesty. But the purpose of the test is simply to assess as far as may be, the scope and strength of your Will, as it is reflected in your more-evident habit-systems.

#### FOOTNOTE TO CHAPTER IX

### GERMAN MILITARY PSYCHOLOGY

THE theory of Will as disciplined habit-systems is basic in the training and selection of officers for the German Armed Forces. This will excite only revulsion in the minds of those who refuse on principle to learn anything from the enemy. But it appears at least reasonable to consider how a nation has come within an ace of winning world dominion twice within a quarter of a century, and further to inquire how they have developed the best-trained military machine in human history.

In a volume issued for the United States Committee for National Morale (1942)<sup>1</sup> under the section 'Specific Requirements for Leadership', the following analysis of German methods is made.

'(a) *Positive Will*. In Nazi psychological jargon, Will is a habit of voluntary response to the command

<sup>1</sup> *German Psychological Warfare*, p. 38.

of the superior leader. This "will-principle" is exemplified in the dynamism or actionism of the whole Nazi movement. Will is considered the most important requisite of the leader personality. Thus a great part of psychological research is concentrated in ways and means of examining and testing the strength of an individual's Will. Professor Ach in his report on the new "will-theory", enumerated some of these tests, while Kreipe presented a critique of accepted will-theories from the Nazi army point of view.<sup>1</sup>

The reader may care to note that we are at the moment concerned with means, not ends; with the methods of selection and not the ideals of the German army. On this ground we may ask further, what is the basis of Professor Ach's new theory?<sup>1</sup> His book is an extremely interesting report on the revaluation of the will-theory. Ach's approach to the freedom of the Will is to replace Kant's categoric imperative with the new tenet: 'Always act according to your responsibility.'

In the Preface to this invaluable analysis by the Committee for National Morale, Arthur Upham Pope, the Committee's Chairman, writes: 'Americans should have no qualms about adopting some of the best features of German military psychology. The Nazis have, on their part, expropriated the findings of many American scholars whose contributions to military psychology were of the greatest interest and value when psychology was introduced as an integral part of the German war machine.'

Mine is the responsibility for suggesting that the German approach to the will-theory may be among 'some of the best features of German military psychology'. If this be deemed special pleading, one can

<sup>1</sup> *Toward a More Modern Study of the Will.*



only confess that it is always pleasant to encounter exact agreement, even if it be only in a Nazi psychologist.

Ach's pretentious 'new theory' is, of course, a deliberate adaptation of the American school of Behaviourism. I hasten to add that this is the only point in common between the view expressed here and that of the celebrated Ach. Both owe a great deal to Behaviourism for the initial idea.

The only point in referring to the German theorists is to show that though perverted as to its ends, the German nation has shown by its dynamism what a tremendous force can be evoked by this approach to human will and determination. By redeeming these principles from dusty pedantry, the German psychologists have developed an individual and a national Will so inflexible as to be defeated only by an overwhelming force of arms. Barbaric world domination is not the only use to which the disciplined Will may be dedicated. There may be little or nothing in the German system to excite our admiration. It is merely noted that German military psychology has the temerity to agree in certain respects with the view advanced in this chapter, namely, that will is habit.

It will scarcely be necessary to agree that the Nazi manipulation of the human will is wholly mischievous. Their coercion of the personality is wholly evil. Their appropriation (without acknowledgement) and their perversion of the Behaviourist concept of Will as organized habit-systems is on a par with their light-fingered propensities in other directions. There might well be a determination to reclaim what is our own and use it to better purpose.

Our democratic ideology stands in antithesis to Treitschke's famous thesis that the State is master, not servant of the people. Our democratic processes

provide checks and balances against authoritarianism. Our conception of individual integrity, human dignity and inviolability runs counter to the whole Nazi philosophy. As Dr. Kimball Young says: 'The Nazi system would construct a personality that revolves around violence, aggression, and a doctrine of racial superiority divinely determined through the Aryan genes. This personality pattern provides nothing for living in a peaceful world of ordinary competition and co-operation.'

But all this, I repeat, is an indictment of the ends, not the means by which Germany has become strong.

'O, it is excellent

To have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous

To use it like a giant.'

Germany has twice in living experience come almost to ruling the world, and she has done it on both occasions by the weight of her arms and the strength of her Will. We have defeated her both times by superior technical skill and greater industrial capacity; but her strength has been sufficient each time to oppose—virtually alone—the whole world. We have yet to show that we can match her psychological insight. That achievement will await our production of an individual and a national Will at least as thoroughly mobilized as the enemy's.

The more excellent Will and the more excellent way lie for us in stern self-discipline. We shall need a unified command in both the man and his society if we are to fight our way back to usefulness, plenitude and lasting peace.

And we'll get there first with the most men by realizing that will-power, whether in a German or a Britisher or a Hairy Ainu, awaits the establishment of sound and good habit-systems.

## CONCLUSION

'Not that I would not, if I could, be both handsome and fat and well dressed and a great athlete and make a million a year; to be a wit, bon vivant, and a lady-killer, as well as a philosopher, philanthropist and a statesman, warrior, African explorer, as well as a tone poet and saint. But the thing is impossible. The millionaire's work would run counter to the saint's. The bon vivant and the philanthropist would trip each other up; and the philosopher and lady-killer could not keep house in the same tenement of clay.'

WILLIAM JAMES

THE reader shall have the right of reply. It is not inconceivable that it might take the following form:

'How free am I in fact, to aspire? I who have been pitchforked into a way of life not of my choosing, having ceased to choose, in a socialized State, even my own way of living it?'

'On the one view, human personality emerges from the cradle with a complete subconscious equipment of fears, loves, repressions and desires; which, if the more fashionable psychologists are to be trusted, constitute a lifelong junta of anonymous tyrants by whose secret orders not only my actions but my very thoughts are determined. From the obscure functioning of glands to the catching of colds I am a creature of predisposition and hereditary determinism.

'Your reply is that I am a personality made by my own hand—self-determined—and that these elements of interior discord cannot coerce a man who will not

be coerced. But is this so? I have been broken in for my destined role as a standardized machine part in this age of conditioned robots; to be employed with the minimum of individuality and resistance. The great mind-softeners of mass propaganda bear upon me and my fellows ceaselessly to the end that we shall become and remain samples of standardized silliness and correct conformity without parallel even in the ancient dictatorships.

‘Yet you can write of self-education, self-improvement and self-determinism.’

If what has been set down has been unpersuasive, no final summary can hope to convince. But if we would be as assiduous in raising the standard of thinking as we are the standard of living, not even the enforced regimentation of our lives for sheer survival could annul our faith and hope of the future.

In the light of war’s dreadful consequence we can no longer hold the illusion of any magic and automatic play of predestination. What realist alternative is there save resolute self-determination?

We who have for years been obliterated entities in uniform can only by this faith take up again the business of living usefully. Long ago T. E. Lawrence told us how military service reacts upon men:

‘It came upon me freshly, how the secret of uniform was to make a crowd solid, dignified, impersonal: to give it the singleness and tautness of an upstanding man. This death’s livery which walled its wearers from ordinary life was sign that they had sold their wills and bodies to the State, and contracted themselves into a service none the less abject for that its beginning was voluntary.’

It may be true that we have been so preoccupied with the paraphernalia of living in a world of death that

the nobility of life itself has been lost. But I cannot believe that this is so. Despite the decadence which preceded—precipitated—it, our victory in arms has been bought at such price as to make such thinking a betrayal of the dead.

It is a mechanized age, in which millions tend to become standardized machine parts both in war and in peace. Personality tends to reduce to the status of a withered limb. The collectivist trends of our time are a challenge to individualism and the integrity of mansoul. But in saving others we have saved ourselves.

The road we must take is not new. Mind and character training are the oldest and most honourable of all the disciplines. They were the touchstones before science harnessed the material powers of wind, water and nuclear energy. They remain the resource of free men made wise by self-knowledge.

And it is in the individual personality that we must wipe out the world's slow stain.

Will Despair tell us that it can never be done; and that character, truth and happiness among men are phantasmagorical?

Let him believe it who dares.

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